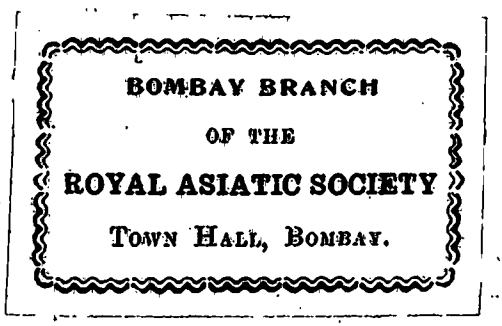

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LETTERS

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TO

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CHARLES BUTLER, Esq.

COMPRISING

ESSAYS ON THE ROMISH RELIGION

AND VINDICATING

The Book of the Church.

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. LL.D.

POET LAUREATE,

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SPANISH ACADEMY, OF THE ROYAL SPANISH ACADEMY OF HISTORY, OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF THE NETHERLANDS, OF THE CYMMRODORION, OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, OF THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY, OF THE BRISTOL PHILOSOPHICAL AND LITERARY SOCIETY, OF THE METROPOLITAN INSTITUTION, OF THE PHILOMATHIC INSTITUTION, &c.



B e 4

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXVI.

God
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The more wit they have spent,
The less they shew'd; not bettering their bad cause.
DANIEL'S *Musophilus.*



LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. ROWORTH, BELL YARD,
TEMPLE BAR.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES WATKIN WILLIAMS WYNN,

&c. &c. &c.

My Dear Friend,

When I inscribed a poem to you some twenty years ago, in memorial of a friendship which had then subsisted more than half our lives, there was a peculiar propriety in so doing. The subject was one concerning which we had talked when we were boys together; it related to your own country; some of your ancestors were among the personages of the tale; historical incidents were introduced which I had collected in your Library, and in your company I had visited some of the scenes which are described. For these reasons,

had there been no other motive, Madoc could not have been inscribed so properly to any person as yourself.

But in prefixing your name to the present volume, this address may appear not less inappropriate, than it was becoming in the former instance. You are an earnest and powerful supporter of what are now called the Catholic claims; and my object in this work is to expose the principles and practices of the Romish Church,..to show that the present advocates of that Church are not to be trusted in their statements,.. to prove that they pervert history, and that they represent their tenets not as those tenets are, but as they wish them to be thought in this country, at this time. Why then, it may be asked, have I dedicated a book to you, the drift of which is in direct opposition to your political wishes and exertions? Certainly not for the purpose

of dwelling upon that opposition: but because, so far as the work is defensive, no person will take a livelier interest in its efficiency. The Book of the Church could need no vindication with you, who know the author well enough to rely upon his fidelity, even if your own reading were not such as renders you a competent judge whether or not he is borne out by historical records, to the full extent of what he has affirmed; but, as an old and tried friend, you will not see without satisfaction how completely and how easily he can vindicate it to the world.

This therefore might have been sufficient motive for thus addressing you. But there is another cause. The book, which is vindicated in this volume, was inscribed to one of whom death has now deprived us. What Oxford and what Literature has lost in Peter Elmsley may in part, and only in

part, be apprehended by those who know the reputation which he had attained both at home and abroad, as a scholar of the very first rank. But it can be fully appreciated only by those who knew the man,.. knew him, as we have known him, early and late in life, in all moods, and at all hours; in the strength of his understanding and in the playfulness of his fancy,..his social and moral qualities as well as his intellectual worth, the variety not less than the extent of his attainments, the richness of his mind, and the wisdom of his heart, for in the heart it is that true wisdom has its seat. You were the oldest and the most intimate of his friends; I also held a place in his esteem; and in the last letter which I received from him, he expressed his satisfaction in the thought that his memory would be associated with mine in after-times. I could not but think of him when

sending forth the present Vindication, and that thought reminded me of you, who are so naturally associated with him in my recollections. Chance brought us together as schoolboys; choice, founded upon esteem and liking, had united us through life, and no difference in pursuits, opinions, or station ever in the slightest degree influenced the friendship which had thus been formed: neither time nor separation affected it; the heart remained unchanged, and the attachment of youth acquired strength and maturity from years. Now, therefore, when one of the cords has been cut, I would not let pass this occasion for expressing a wish that death may not divide our names.

Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

PREFACE.

"MR. SOUTHEY," says a late Journalist, "is arming, but it cannot be in his own defence, for he will scarcely find an enemy to combat. Mr. Butler's appeal to history has been accepted by Mr. Townsend; his theological information has fallen to nothing before the learning and acuteness of Dr. Phillpotts; and what answer can he give to the affecting personal experience of Mr. Blanco White?" The controversy which the Book of the Church has occasioned might indeed have been safely left in the hands of such advocates; and probably in their hands I might have left it, if some progress had not been made in the present volume before their works appeared. There were, however, in Mr. Butler's book particular criticisms and remarks affecting the fidelity of my statements, which were properly considered as my individual concern. One of these, which, if not the most important, is the most curious, I shall notice in this place.

A few days after the Book of the Church was published, I called on the friend to whom this volume is inscribed, and heard from him of a letter in the newspapers, showing that a story concerning Gardiner's death, which I had taken from Fox, could not be true. I was on the point of leaving town; and when shortly afterwards a second edition of the work was called for, and the Publisher wrote to ask whether any alterations were to be made, I gave directions for expunging the passage, without troubling myself to inquire into a question which I had no immediate means of investigating. It may be imagined then with what surprize I perused the following passage in Mr. Butler's Letters; "the falsehood of the story was noticed by Dr. Lingard; still it found its place in the first edition of your work. Articles afterwards appeared in different newspapers, showing the falsehood of Fox's narrative: *you* have however retained it in your second edition; and long may it there remain, as proof of the little reliance that should be placed on those writers who place their trust in Fox."

What could I suppose, upon reading this positive assertion, but that the directions which I had sent to Mr. Murray must have been mislaid, or overlooked; that the fact was as Mr.

Butler had stated it; and that a charge affecting my integrity as an historian was brought against me, of which I knew myself innocent, and yet must appear to stand convicted? Under this apprehension I referred to the second edition, and found, hardly with less surprize than the charge itself had excited, that the passage was *not* there; that my directions had been duly observed; and that Mr. Butler's assertion so positively made, so pointedly applied, was, ...(what shall I say?)...like many other of his assertions. He had not thought it necessary to ascertain the fact for himself; but had hazarded this broad, unqualified accusation upon the faith of others, who either knew not, or cared not what they said.

Convicted, however, I must have stood in the opinion of the public if I had not thus casually heard of the communication in the newspapers. For I never saw that letter,.. nor heard of it from any other quarter. I had not seen Dr. Lingard's fifth volume in which his remarks upon the story are contained,.. and I had forgotten that the mistake in Fox was pointed out in Collyer's Ecclesiastical History, not having referred to that author when engaged upon the Marian persecution, nor having noted the passage, when I went through his work, many years ago. Any man's character

may be endangered by a conspiracy against it, or by a scheme of settled falsehood: but till this incident occurred I was hardly aware how seriously, in such a case as this, it might be affected by accident.

The truth or falsehood of the story was in itself of no importance. It could neither affect the reputation of John Fox who recorded the sufferings of our Martyrs, nor of Stephen Gardiner who had so great a share in inflicting them. Fox tells us on whose authority he related the anecdote. And whether the disease of which Gardiner died came on him like an immediate stroke of divine vengeance, or unperceived, in the ordinary course of nature, the character of that crafty and hard-hearted man remains the same, and is as odious as it deserves to be. I inserted it, believing it to be true; and upon hearing that in one point it was certainly erroneous, I expunged it, little thinking that I should ever have occasion to notice it again, still less that I should be accused of bringing forward and retaining an anecdote which I knew to be false, for to that Mr. Butler's accusation amounts. In his book, which conveys in the smoothest language the most insidious misrepresentations, ...which is not more plausible in manner than disingenuous in matter, ...not more courteous and complimentary

in its terms, than injurious in its spirit and design; I should have been sorry if there had been a single charge which I could not refute as easily as I can unravel its sophistry, and as completely as I can lay open the fallacy of its statements.

As a courteous controversialist, it would not be easy to find a parallel for my antagonist: all who are acquainted with Mr. Butler would expect this from his habitual suavity, the benignity of his disposition, and the practical toleration which that disposition induces, fostered as it has been in the wholesome atmosphere of a protestant country. No person, he says, admires more than he does the golden sentence of St. Francis of Sales, "A good Christian is never outdone in good manners." I should be sorry to offend against them in any point; but I should be more sorry to be outdone in ingenuousness and in good faith. Throughout his Letters, Mr. Butler has represented, that whatever I had said of the Papal Religion, in sketching the history of the English Church, was intended to ruin the moral and religious character of the existing English Romanists, and hold them up to their fellow countrymen as an abomination! This he has asserted; and this of course must be believed by all those of his own persuasion who have read his book, and would deem it a sin even to look into mine.

The Book of the Church is strictly an historical work, and so free from all allusion to existing circumstances, that I had no scruple in dedicating it to one whose opinions were in favour of political concessions to the Romanists. Assuredly I should not have done this, if it had borne upon that question in any other manner than as a faithful history of the English Church, and a faithful view of that system from which the Reformation delivered us, *must* bear upon it. The present volume, which vindicates that history and that view, bears more directly upon the question, though it nowhere enters into it at length. But had it lain within the scope of my immediate purpose, I would have shown that what is insidiously termed Catholic Emancipation is not a question of toleration, but of political power; that the disqualifications, which the government is called upon to remove, are not the cause of the disordered state of Ireland, and consequently, that their removal could not effect the cure; that farther concessions would produce farther demands, as all former concessions have done; and that, if the desperate error were committed, of conceding what is now required, the agitators would pursue their darling scheme, of overthrowing the Irish Church and separating the two countries, with renewed zeal, and heightened hopes,.. and with

far greater probability, not indeed of ultimate success, but of bringing upon Ireland the horrors of a civil and religious war!

The vital interests of England would also be seriously endangered, though the danger would be less immediate. The Romish Church is inherently, incurably, and restlessly intolerant. Every Roman-Catholic proclaims in his creed that none can be saved out of the Romish Church; and vows in that creed, that he will, by all means in his power, bring those, over whom he has any influence, to believe in it. This is the religious and sworn duty of every Roman-Catholic; and this principle it was which rendered the Revolution of 1688 necessary for the preservation of our civil and religious liberty. By that event our twofold Constitution, consisting of Church and State, as it now exists, was established and secured. It would therefore be a solecism in policy, were we to entrust those persons with power in the State, who are bound in conscience to use it for subverting the Church, ...for undoing the work of the Reformation and of the Revolution, .. for bringing us again into spiritual bondage, and re-establishing that system of superstition, idolatry, and persecution, from which the sufferings of our martyrs, and the wisdom of our ancestors, by God's blessing, delivered us. Far as we may think them from

it, this is the consummation upon which their designs as well as their desires are bent. Their own corrupt Church it is not possible that they should ever re-instate; but give them the ground for which they are now contending, and it is very possible that the well-ordered system under which we have flourished may be most seriously endangered; for it is worthy of especial consideration, that they have for their immediate allies every faction which is banded against the State, every demagogue, every irreligious and every seditious Journalist, every open and every insidious enemy to Monarchy and to Christianity. All these in their several stations write, speak, and act in favour of the Roman-Catholic claims. And this alone ought to make those persons hesitate, who, under the influence of very different motives, have engaged in the same cause. They would do well to consider *with whom* they are acting; that they cannot be mistaken as to the *end* at which these parties are aiming; but that they may be mistaken when they suppose that a measure, which is eagerly and systematically promoted by such parties and such men, can be otherwise than injurious to the Constitution, and to those principles upon which the welfare of this nation is founded.

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VINDICIÆ ECCLESIÆ ANGLICANÆ.

LETTERS

TO

CHARLES BUTLER, ESQ.

IN

VINDICATION

OF

THE BOOK OF THE CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION.

SIR,

You have called me into the field of controversy, and though I have heretofore accepted from you invitations of a different kind, with a different feeling, I accept this also cheerfully and with good will. It was my intention not to have answered any animadversions which the Book of the Church might draw forth from the members of your communion. Being sure of the ground whereon I stood, and of the fidelity of my statements, I would have left that good work for other and younger champions, who will not be wanting to the cause of the Reformation, and more especially of the Church

of England at this time. You, Sir, are perhaps the only appellant for whom I could have been induced to alter this resolution. There is a pleasure in manifesting toward an honourable and generous opponent, a due and becoming sense of his worth. There is a pleasure in receiving courtesy on such occasions, and a greater pleasure in returning it. In the spirit, Sir, with which you have addressed me, and in which I reply, even controversy may be made as wholesome a discipline for the disposition as for the intellect.

Meeting, as we thus do, not with the profession merely, but with the sincere and cordial sentiment of mutual esteem, there are other circumstances also, which place us upon terms of singular conformity. We are both laymen; both have been led to the study of ecclesiastical history by inclination and by choice; and each is not more warmly than conscientiously attached to the principles of his own Church. The English Romanists have produced few writers so tolerant, and, in general, so equitable as Mr. Butler; and for myself, I dare affirm that no man has ever rendered more ample justice to the virtues and motives of those whose principles he has impugned, and whose actions he has condemned. I appeal to you, Sir, whe-

ther I am not justified in this assertion, as it respects the Methodists? And I may observe, that if the Methodists were asked whether or not I had acted thus toward the Roman Catholics in the Book of the Church, they would answer the one appeal as fairly, and with as little hesitation as you would do the other. The English Romanists will proudly acknowledge you for their advocate, (whatever may be thought by the Ultra-Montanists,) as one in whose hands their cause will lose nothing in strength, while it gains all that can be given to it by the most winning urbanity and apparent candour. Nor shall I be disowned by those members of the Church of England, who understand its real interests and its inestimable worth.

I am sure it will not displease you, Sir, if I notice one other point of conformity, in which the coincidence is as exact as our opinions upon the great question at issue are opposite to each other. So far as in either case we may have been biassed by circumstances in forming those opinions, the circumstances have been precisely similar. You, Sir, grew up with feelings of reverential affection towards a near kinsman, who well deserved the respect and honour which you have so ably paid to his memory. Your uncle, Mr. Alban Butler, was employed on the

English mission; he was a man of letters, holding firmly the doctrines of his Church, but partaking no more of its intolerance than its tenets absolutely prescribe: and while he officiated as a minister of that Church in a land of Protestants, he lived in charity with those whom he believed to be lost in error, and enjoyed the friendship of some of the most eminent and illustrious members of the establishment to which he was opposed. One to whom I stand in the same degree of relationship, was minister of the English Church in a Roman Catholic country; he was not, indeed, employed on an *English mission,* for the Romanists never allow to others that liberty which they claim for themselves. During my childhood, Mr. Herbert Hill was chaplain to the British factory at Porto; after a few years he removed, in the same capacity, to Lisbon, and continued to reside there till, upon the occupation of that city by the French, he was driven to his native land. Like your venerable kinsman, Sir, he obtained the respect of those among whom he dwelt, (though he had far stronger prejudices to overcome,) and kept up a literary and friendly intercourse with the most distinguished of the Portugueze prelates. Both you and I, Sir, have examined and decided for ourselves; the deci-

sion has been made in the best exercise of a free and upright judgement; and yet we may both acknowledge that it may have been confirmed, though not brought about, by feelings of which you know the value and the strength. Your kinsman, of whom you never speak without love and reverence, is gone to his reward. Mine is yet living in a good old age: to him *quicquid sum, quicquid futurus postea, adceptum fero;* and I account it not among the least of those advantages which I have derived through his means, that by residing with him for awhile in a Roman Catholic kingdom, I have seen what the Roman Catholic system of religion is;... seen it, not as it is represented by those of its advocates who write for Protestant readers, but as it is in practice,... as it is in itself, and in its consequences.

The opportunity thus presented to me was not lost. In what manner my attention was first particularly excited to the subject I will venture to relate in this place. To a person of your Catholic pursuits and acquirements, (I use the epithet in its best and genuine sense,) nothing that relates to literary history will be uninteresting; and in this case the impulse which my mind received, has, in its results, called forth the exertion of yours. We shall

come presently to our polemics. In none of its points shall I shrink from the controversy. I have more to attack than to defend; more to amplify and enforce my statements, than to retract or qualify them. Even then I may sometimes diverge into topics where we have a common interest and no discordant views. And now, while I am prologizing with the freedom, and something of the feeling, of friendly correspondence, you will, I am persuaded, not unwillingly, permit me to indulge in reminiscences which bear upon the subject of these letters, and the things which have placed us in opposition to each other.

When I was a school-boy at Westminster, I frequented the house of a school-fellow, who has continued till this day to be one of my most intimate and dearest friends. The house was so near Dean's Yard, that it was hardly considered as being out of my prescribed bounds; and I had free access to the library, a well-stored and pleasant room, within a few yards of that spot where the old Dialogue concerning the Exchequer was written, *Anno vicesimo tertio regni Regis Henrici Secundi;* and in like manner, *juxta fluvium Tamesem,* looking over the river. There many of my truant hours were delightfully spent in reading Picart's Re-

ligious Ceremonies. The book impressed my imagination strongly; and before I left school, I had formed the intention of exhibiting all the more prominent and poetical forms of mythology which have at any time obtained among mankind, by making each the groundwork of an heroic poem. Keeping this intention always in view, while I disciplined myself in the art of poetry by extensive reading and assiduous practice, I omitted no opportunity of preparing for its execution, by laying up such materials as I had the fortune to meet with; and upon this project I was brooding when, in the winter of 1795-6, I accompanied my uncle, Mr. Hill, from England to Lisbon, taking Madrid in the way. During our stay in the Spanish metropolis, we strolled one morning into the cloisters of the new Franciscan Convent, where there was a series of pictures representing the whole history of St. Francis: they were good pictures, and an artist was employed in making drawings from them, probably for the engraver. You need not be reminded, Sir, how little the history of the Romish Saints is known in Protestant countries. I knew nothing more of St. Francis at that time than what I had read in Mosheim some three or four years before: and when the whole portentous story was thus at once pre-

sented to me in the strength and vivid beauty of graphic delineation, I do not remember ever to have been so greatly astonished. "Do they believe all this, Sir?" said I to my companion; "Yes, and a great deal more of the same kind," was the reply.

Perhaps, Sir, the Book of the Church might never have been written, had it not been for the impression which I then received. My first thought was,...here is a mythology not less wild and fanciful than any of those upon which my imagination was employed, and one which ought to be included in my ambitious design. A little reflection convinced me that there was an insuperable objection to making this the machinery of a serious poem; because in so doing the most sacred truths could not be separated from the audacious superstructure of Romish fable. It then occurred to me, that its grotesque character made it excellently adapted for a mock-heroic strain; but to this also the same fatal objection applied, and in greater force: for though I was sufficiently inclined by nature to look at things in their ludicrous aspect, that dangerous propensity, happily for myself, has always been overruled by worthier considerations. But my attention had thus been drawn to the legendary and

monastic history of the Papal Church; and when we reached Lisbon my uncle recommended me to look at the works* of one of his predecessors, Dr. Michael Geddes, (afterwards Chancellor of the diocese of Sarum,) as a collection containing much valuable information concerning the history of Spain and Portugal, and the actual state of the Romish superstition

* They consist of Miscellaneous Tracts, in three vols. 8vo. 1730 (3d edition). Several Tracts against Popery, together with the Life of D'Alvaro de Luna—one vol. 8vo. 1715. The History of the Church of Malabar, giving an Account of the Persecutions and violent Methods of the Romish Prelates to reduce them to the Subjection of the Church of Rome.—8vo. 1694. The Church History of Ethiopia, wherein, among other things, the two great splendid Roman Missions into that Empire are placed in their true light. To which are added an Epitome of the Dominican History of that Church, and an Account of the Practices and Conviction of Maria of the Annunciation, the famous Nun of Lisbon.—8vo. 1696. The Council of Trent no free Assembly, with an Introduction concerning Councils, and a Collection of Dr. Vargas's Letters.—8vo. 1697. The most celebrated Popish Ecclesiastical Romance; being the Life of Veronica of Milan: a book certified by the Heads of the University of Conimbra, in Portugal, to be revised by the Angels, and approved of by God, *ja visto e revisto pallos Anjos, e approvado por Dios.* Begun to be translated from the Portugueze, by the late Dr. Geddes, and finished by Mr. Ozell, with the approbation of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, in whose library at Lambeth the original of this curiosity remains.—8vo. 1716.

in those countries. There, Sir, I found an account* of the Granadan manuscripts and relics, one of the most demonstrable impostures that was ever practised upon public credulity: yet was it solemnly and judicially ratified by the ecclesiastical authorities in Spain, who pronounced that the said relics "ought to be received, honoured, venerated, and adored, with due honour and worship:" and nearly fifty years elapsed before the Court of Rome condemned the palpable and detected fraud. There I read the Legend of †Santiago; the History‡ of the House of Loretto; and the Life of Maria de§ Jesus, Abbess of the Franciscan Convent of the Immaculate Conception at Agreda, whose biography of the Virgin Mary, as dictated to her by the Virgin herself, was published with the sanction of her Diocesan (who was one of the Council of State), of the Franciscan Order, of the Inquisition (by its *Calificador*, a Jesuit), of the General of the Benedictines, and of the Universities of Salamanca‖, Alcala and Louvain. And

* Misc. Tracts, vol. i. p. 345. † Misc. Tracts, vol. ii. p. 221.

‡ Several Tracts, p. 99. § Misc. Tracts, vol. iii. p. 141.

‖ The value of their opinions cannot be disputed by the English Romanists, inasmuch as Salamanca and Louvain are two of those Universities upon whose authority the British Parliament is required to believe, that the infallible and immu-

there I found a View* of "all the Orders of Monks and Friars in the Romish Church, with an account of their Founders, sufficient to help any one to form a right idea of the men, and of the writers of their lives."...After this, his accounts of the Portugueze Inquisition,† and of the Auto-da-fe, which he had himself‡ seen, were not required to make me bless the day when Martin Luther was born.

Sir, I might have been told in England that these things were misrepresented, or at least exaggerated by Dr. Geddes;...that no such legends were to be found in Mr. Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints, or believed by the Roman Catholics of the present age. But, incredible as it might seem that such abominable impos-

table Papal Church at this day condemns, reprobates, and stigmatizes certain principles upon which, at no very remote period, it acted as notoriously as it professed and inculcated them. See Mr. Grattan's speech of May 25, 1802, upon the Catholic Claims. And Mr. Butler's Book of the Roman Catholic Church, Appendix, Note I.

* Misc. Tracts, vol. iii. 357. † Misc. Tracts, vol. i. p. 385.

‡ He saw one of the sufferers on that accursed day gagged as soon as he came out of the gates of the Inquisition, because, having looked up to the sun, which he had not seen before for several years, he exclaimed, "How is it possible for any people who behold that glorious body, to worship any being but Him that created it!" Misc. Tracts, vol. i. 406.

tures should ever have been palmed upon a Christian people, I knew that there was neither misrepresentation nor exaggeration in his statements. The authorities were at hand. And that the belief in such things was still entertained among the people and kept up by the clergy I had proof before my sight: for I was in a country where Popery wore no disguise. Knowing that it was gaining ground in England, because its history has passed away from the remembrance of the nation, and its real and indelible character is no longer understood, one of the objects which I resolved to qualify myself for performing in due season, was that of exposing this baneful system in its proper deformity, and showing it to my countrymen such as it has been, is, and must continue to be, so long as it maintains its pretension to be infallible. That purpose will be pursued in these Letters. It has been partly fulfilled in the Book of the Church, some latter pages of which were written in that very room, looking over the river Thames, where in my boyhood I had first been attracted to a course of reading which in its consequences had thus produced it. More than thirty years had intervened; the house had several times changed its possessors; it was now occupied by another of my best and oldest friends. Old

thoughts and feelings returned when I was seated at this employment in that same pleasant apartment which had formerly been the scene of so many truant and yet most profitable hours: and though, as Ali says in his proverbs, "the remembrance of youth is a sigh," I had the comfort of experiencing that it is not accompanied with regret when we look back upon years which have been neither idly nor ill spent.

PROPER STYLE OF CONTROVERSY.

I PURSUE your arrangement, Sir, because my intention of making this volume an answer to yours in all its parts, may be facilitated by making it as far as possible its counterpart. That order leads me to notice your remarks upon the spirit in which controversies of this nature ought to be conducted. Just as I had come to this part of the subject, the British Catholic Association passed its vote of "thanks to Mr. Charles Butler, for his able refutation of the calumnies heaped upon the (Roman) Catholic Church by the Poet Laureate, Mr. Southey, in his Book of the Church." The thanks of that body, Sir, you have well deserved: but it is somewhat premature to decree a triumph before the field is won, and while too the antagonist is in full heart and strength. As to the charge of calumny, whether that will rest upon the Book of the Church, or the Roman Catholic Association, remains to be proved. Dr. Milner is included in the same vote of thanks: whatever notice I may think proper to bestow upon his obser-

vations, will be included therefore in this reply; but I must premise that the Titular Bishop is not included in those acknowledgements of courtesy and expressions of respect, which are made with perfect sincerity towards you.

You state,* Sir, in the words of Father Jones, "a Benedictine, called in religion Father Leander a Sancto Martino," the points both of discipline and doctrine wherein the Church of England and that of Rome agree: and upon this you observe that, "when there is so near an approximation in religious creeds, there certainly should be an equal approximation in Christian and moral charity; an equal wish to soothe, to conciliate, to find the real points of difference very few, and to render them still fewer; and an equal unwillingness on each side to say, or to write, any thing unpleasing to the feelings of the other." To the first part of this observation I assent most fully: upon the rest I must distinguish.

The points of agreement are so many and so important, that the members of the one Church who will not acknowledge those of the other to be their fellow Christians, show themselves to be deficient in the fundamental virtue of Christian

* Page 2.

charity. In the general dealings of society, and in the intercourse between nation and nation, it behoves us to remember these, and these only. But the points of difference are not less important; under certain circumstances, indeed, they become more so; and therefore in concerns of great moment, whether in private or public life, the points of difference are those which are mainly to be considered:... for example, in case of a proposed marriage between a Roman Catholic and a Protestant,... or of a proposed legislative measure which would give the Roman Catholics political power in a Protestant country. Is it not obvious that in either of these cases the party which has something to gain will endeavour "to conciliate, and to represent the real points of difference as very few?" and is it not a matter, both of duty and of common prudence on the other, to inquire, carefully, whether those differences may not, in their consequences, occasion, in the first case, individual unhappiness, and, in the second, national inconvenience and danger?

With regard to saying or writing anything on either side, unpleasing to the feelings of the other;... how, Sir, upon such a subject is this to be avoided? A conciliatory and unimpassioned tone might easily, as well as fitly, be

maintained, if the controverted matter were merely theological or speculative; but I have to deal with historical facts,... and facts, too, some of them so appalling in themselves and in their consequences, that they cannot take possession of the mind, without calling forth "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." I could wish, earnestly wish, that these letters "might not contain a sentence or expression at which the very amiable and able person to whom they are addressed could take offence;" and as relating to himself, I dare promise that they shall not. But as they regard the subject, no such hope can, without folly, be entertained. Like yourself, Sir, "what* I consider to be truth, I must tell;" and much as, like yourself, I might desire "to† tell it in a manner which may show sincere respect for those whose different notions it opposes," it would be dissembling pitifully, were I to pretend respect for a Church whose corruptions and practices I have been led to investigate and expose. The history of this country, and more especially its ecclesiastical history, is not one of those subjects which a writer may treat and "meddle only with toothless truths." You say, that "superstition‡ and

* Page 4. † Page 11. ‡ Page 338.

idolatry are the most offensive words in language to the ear of a Roman Catholic when they are applied to his religion," and that these words are "the burthen of the Book of the Church."

Ma quel ch'è ver bisogna dir per forza.

I am afraid, Sir, that if I were to substitute the tenderest synonimes, or, in imitation of your own polished manner, to convey an unpleasant meaning in the softest periphrasis, it would still be impossible to please you.

> What's in a name?—that which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet;

and, in like manner, the ramp and the stinkard will continue to be as offensive and as rank, although we should dignify them by their Linnæan appellations. The nature of things is not to be altered by altering their names; but the writer who knows that he is engaged in a good cause, will be especially careful to call things by their right names, because it is by the abuse* and misapplication of words, that men have most commonly been deluded by demagogues

* South has some admirable Discourses upon "the fatal imposture and force of words," taking for his text, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." The reader who is not conversant with the works of this most powerful and excellent writer would do well to read these sermons.

and knaves of every description. We learn from history what political evils have been produced by an artifice which, though it is as old as the temptation in Paradise, is never repeated without some success; and its every-day effects are to be seen in private life. Are we improved either in practice or in feeling, by calling a profligate life a gay one, giving to habitual drunkenness the name of social or convivial habits, and speaking of acts of seduction, or adulterous intercourse, as affairs of gallantry? *Nullis vitiis desunt pretiosa nomina.* Idolatry and superstition would cease to prevail if they were represented always in their true light, and known for what they are. How, Sir, am I to avoid these words, which are so "unpleasing to a Romish ear," without betraying the cause of the Reformation? It is because the Church of Rome is an idolatrous and superstitious Church that we have separated from her. It was for bearing testimony against her idolatry and superstition that our Martyrs died at the stake. If superstition has been rightly *defined to be "the observance of unnecessary and uncommanded rites or practices; religion without morality; false worship; reverence of beings not proper objects of worship:" ... if idolatry be †"the

* Johnson. † Id.

worship of Images;" if it be, "not* only an accounting or worshipping that for God which is not God, but also a worshipping the true God in a way unsuitable to his nature, and particularly by the mediation of images;" how, without using these terms, can a Protestant describe the practices of monkery? How can he speak of the morality of the casuists, relics, miraculous images, and, above all, the great mystery of the Romish Church?

THE CREED OF PIUS IV.

You have inserted in your †introduction, Sir, the creed of Pope Pius IV., published in 1564, in the form of a bull, as an authentic exposition of the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. You present it as an accurate and explicit summary of the Roman Catholic faith, to which all proselytes who are admitted into that Church publicly testify their assent, without restriction or qualification.

This profession of faith commences with the Nicene creed, after which, thirteen articles are appended. Those articles express, that the Romanist most firmly admits and embraces apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all

* South. † Page 5.

other constitutions and observances of his Church; that he admits the Scriptures according to the sense which the Church holds, to whom it belongs to judge of their true interpretation; and that he will never interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers: that there are seven sacraments instituted by our Lord for the salvation of mankind; that he admits the ceremonies received in the solemn administration of those sacraments; that he receives all and every one of the things defined and declared in the Council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification; "that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrifice of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the (Roman) Catholic Church calls transubstantiation: that under either kind alone, whole and entire Christ and a true sacrament is received; that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful; that

the Saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invocated; that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated; that the images of Christ and of the Mother of God, ever Virgin, and of the other Saints, are to be retained, and due honour and veneration given them; that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people. The Roman Catholic acknowledges the Roman Church as the mother and mistress of all Churches, and swears true obedience to the Roman Bishop, the successor of St. Peter the Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ: he receives all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general Councils, and particularly by the Council of Trent; and he condemns, rejects, and anathematizes all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever condemned and anathematized by the Church. Finally, he professes, that out of this true (Roman) Catholic faith, none can be saved.

Before I proceed, a remark may be made here which our good old writers would have called *considerable*, . . . it is, that Pope Pius IV. has added thirteen articles to a Christian's creed as necessary to salvation, not one of which was

thought so by the Apostles. Should you smile at the remark, and remind me that two of them relate to the Council of Trent, I must take the liberty of asserting, what has again and again been proved, that the points contained in the other eleven were just as little known to the Apostles, and as little dreamt of by them, as the proceedings of that notable assembly.

To the whole thirteen, however, we are to understand, that the English Roman Catholics fully and unequivocally assent. Do they know to what they have assented? Or am I mistaken in supposing, Sir, that the Bishop of Chester's remarks upon this confession of faith must have occasioned, in one of your generous feelings and practical toleration, thoughts, which, as Burnet says, can be "of no easy digestion"? You remember how fierce an uproar was raised in England against what was called the &c. oath: but could Sir Edward Coke himself have extracted as much from the most productive &c. in Littleton, as is included in this comprehensive and indiscriminating assent? I say nothing of "ecclesiastical traditions, and *all* other constitutions, and observances;" nor do I press you upon "the *unanimous* consent of *all* the fathers;" nor upon the contradictory decrees of different councils; nor will I inquire with what mental

reservation this true obedience to the Pope is promised, when we know, beyond all possibility of denial, that no reservation was intended or allowed by him who drew the bond. But I must remind you, Sir, that among those things "delivered, defined, and declared, by the canons, and general Councils," which the Romanists, according to this your statement, receive at this time without distinction, the most daring assumptions of temporal power by the Papacy are contained; and the most intolerant opinions respecting those whom the Romanists call heretics are explicitly avowed. That the Pope may absolve subjects from their allegiance, depose Princes, and give their dominions to Catholics, to be enjoyed by them when they have exterminated the heretics, is a maxim which has been decreed by the fourth Lateran Council and acted upon by the Popes;* and this sentence all temporal lords are declared to incur who do not, to the utmost of their power, assist in rooting out those

* See the canon *de Hæreticis* in the Bishop of Peterborough's excellent Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome, p. 218. And see also his irrefragable proofs, that this abominable canon applies to temporal lords in general, principal as well as feudal, by the very letter as well as spirit of the law; and that it has been specially applied to the sovereign of England.

who hold heretical opinions within their jurisdiction. The Council of Constance, in the ever-memorable cases of John Hus and Jerome of Prague, pronounced that faith was not to be kept with heretics; and upon this decision, and the alleged authority of the Decretals, the Emperor Sigismund submitting, "like a good son of the *Church," allowed the safe-conduct which he had given to be broken, and the men who had confided in it to be burnt alive. Your Creed proclaims, with the Council of Trent, that the Church of Rome is the *Mistress* as well as Mother of all Churches; and if the significant word required any exposition, it would be

* L'Enfant's History of the Council of Constance, Book i. § 57. Book iv. § 32.

Men who, like the members of that Council, had been trained in the morality of the Casuists, the law of the Canonists, and the religion of the Romish Church, would desire no better authority for requiring this detestable breach of faith than the Decretals afforded them. For example: *Non est observandum juramentum quo malum incautè permittitur.* (P. 2. Caus. 22. Quest. 4. ff. 286.) *Non omnia promissa solvenda sunt.* (Ibid.) *Non observentur juramenta quæ fiunt contra divina mandata.* (Ibid.) *Aliquando non expedit promissum servare sacramentum.* (Ibid.) This is proved in the Decretals by the example of Herod's oath to the daughter of Herodias; and in the logic of a persecutor it would be held as great a sin to let a heretic escape, as to put a prophet to death.

I quote from the Paris edition of the Decretals. 1518.

found in the acts of the same assembly, when they sanctioned the declaration of Pius V., that heretics and schismatics are *still* in the power of the Church, as persons to be called by it to judgement, punished, and doomed by anathema to damnation.* The Church of England is anathematized by all persons who acknowledge the creed of Pope Pius IV., and by all who acknowledge themselves Roman Catholics that

* Do. 179. The same principle is now taught at Maynooth. The Bishop of Peterborough (p. 180) quotes the following words from the treatise *De Ecclesiâ Christi*, which contains the sum and substance of the theological lectures delivered at that college:—*Ecclesia suam retinet jurisdictionem in omnes Apostatas, Hæreticos, et Schismaticos, quanquam ad illius corpus non jam pertineant.* p. 394. "The Church *retains* its jurisdiction over all apostates, heretics, and schismatics, though they no longer belong to its body." Well may this able Prelate say, "there can be no necessity for sending to a *foreign* university to know whether the Church of Rome considers the members of *our* Church as amenable to its jurisdiction on the charge of heresy and schism. Now, if such a tenet is maintained in the college of Maynooth, when the Romanists are *petitioners* for political power, we cannot doubt what would be the fate of Protestants, if the Church of Rome should again acquire in these dominions the ascendancy to which it is aspiring. Nor is even the sovereign of these dominions exempted from that claim of jurisdiction; for he is equally included in the title of heretic and schismatic; he is equally included among those whom the Church of Rome has declared to be worthy of punishment."—*Comparative View*, p. 203.

creed is held. Here we have an example of that convenient substitution of terms to which I have before alluded. The word *anathematize* may be used, as well as received, with so vague a notion of its import, that they who assent to it manifest rather a lack of discretion than of charity: but translate it into plain English, and I think, Sir, your heart will hesitate as well as your tongue before you pronounce the Church of England *accursed*. Accursed, however, it is declared to be in the creed which you have laid before us as the authentic profession of the British Roman Catholics. That same creed proclaims, that out of the Roman Catholic faith none can be saved. Is it not the bounden and religious duty of those who hold this article of faith to persecute, whenever they have the power? Is not the principle as intolerable as it is intolerant? And ought the persons by whom it is avowed, ever to be entrusted with political power in a Protestant kingdom? Were you, Sir, to consult your heart and your intellect alone, there is no man living from whom I should with more confidence expect such an answer to these queries as must be given by every unsophisticated understanding.

The foregoing remarks were in the press

when I learnt from a letter in the New* Times that a passage of some importance in the creed of Pope Pius IV. is omitted in your version. The omission might have escaped my notice, even if the original had been at hand; for in such things one who is entitled to expect credit for fidelity, is generally ready to give it. It may have arisen from oversight when you inserted this creed in a former† publication, from which you would naturally reprint it now without apprehending that any revision could be necessary. But it is a noticeable omission; for in the words‡ which have thus been dropt the Roman Catholic "promises, vows, and swears, that he will, as much as may be in his power, procure that this (Roman) Catholic faith, out of which none can

* Tuesday, April 5, 1825.

† Historical and Literary Account of the Formularies, Confessions of Faith, or Symbolic Books of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and principal Protestant Churches. 1816.

‡ *Hanc veram Catholicam Fidem, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, quam in præsenti sponte profiteor, et veraciter teneo, eandem integram et inviolatam, usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum constantissimè (Deo adjuvante) retinere et confiteri,* atque a meis subditis, vel illis quorum cura ad me, in munere meo spectabit, teneri, doceri et prædicari, quantum in me erit, curaturum, *ego idem N. spondeo, voveo ac juro. Sic me Deus adjuvet, et hæc Sancta Dei evangelia.*

be saved, be held, taught, and preached by those who are subject to him, or who in virtue of his office shall be under his care." The clause is important in itself, and for the sake of those readers who may need either to be informed or reminded that it is enjoined as a religious duty upon the Romanists to promote the Roman Catholic faith *as much as may be in their power*. There is no mention in this creed of the *means* whereby they are to promote it; but there *is* in those Decretals, all things delivered and declared in which, are received in that comprehensive confession. In those Decretals it is declared that heretics, however unwilling, are to be brought to salvation by *force; that the Church is to persecute† them; and that the ‡enemies of the Church are to be coerced by arms.

The creed, Sir, which you have thus brought forward, comprehends all those obnoxious opinions which, in the name of the British Roman Catholics, you are so eager to renounce or to disavow. It comprehends an acknowledgement of the temporal authority of the Popes,

* *Hæretici etiam ad salutem inviti sunt trahendi.* P. 2. Caus. 23. Quest. 4. ff. 299.

† *Ecclesia ratione etiam persequitur hæreticos.* Ibid. ff. 300.

‡ *Ecclesiasticæ religionis inimici etiam bellis sunt coercendi.* Ibid. ff. 301.

of their power to depose Kings, and to absolve subjects from their allegiance. It includes an assent, to the propositions that heretics are to be persecuted; *that faith is not to be kept with them; that †simulation is lawful, and that the guilt of homicide‡ is not incurred by killing excommunicated persons, if zeal for religion be the motive. For these principles have been laid down in the Canons, or proclaimed by Councils; and upon these principles the Papal Church has acted,....so far in strict conformity to its own creed. In my heart, Sir, I believe that you heartily disavow them, and that the great body of the British Romanists are sincere in disclaiming such intolerable opinions. But they are distinctly asserted in your Canons and by your Councils; and they are comprehended in this Creed which you yourself present as

* See note, p. 25.

† *Simulatio utilis est, et in tempore assumenda.* (Dec. Pars 2. Caus. 22. Quest. 2. ff. 285.) A truly curious passage occurs in the Decretals under this text: *ipse Dominus noster, non habens peccatum, nec carnem peccati, simulationem peccatricis carnis assumpsit:* which the marginal gloss expounds thus: *simulationem, ut falleret Diabolum,...dicit enim auctoritas, si Diabolus eum Filium Dei scivisset, nunquam eum a Judæis crucifigi passus fuisset.* St. Augustine is the *Auctoritas.*

‡ *Non sunt homicidæ qui adversus excommunicatos zelo matris Ecclesiæ armantur.* Dec. p. 2. Caus. 23. Quest. 5. ff. 306.

"an accurate and explicit summary* of the Roman Catholic faith," to be received "*without restriction or qualification.*" It is impossible, Sir, that you, and the body for which you speak, can assent to all that this creed includes; your feelings, your opinions, your solemn protestations are in opposition to it. But in rendering to you and to them this willing justice, I must add that there are some among you whose temper and whose doctrines are in perfect accord with these principles. There are men among you upon whom the mantles of Gardiner and Bonner have descended; who equivocate like Jesuits,... and who would persecute like Dominicans, if the power were in their hands. And these are the consistent Romanists,... Romanists in heart and soul as well as profession, who assent to all that the thirteen additional articles of their creed comprehend, and would joyfully act up to the very letter of their law. But for yourself, Sir, and those who with you renounce in full sincerity these abominable tenets, and who are therefore reduced to the uncomfortable necessity of denying in your public declarations what you profess and swear to in your Confession of Faith, this

* Page 5.

religious grievance must surely be more painful than the political disabilities which those tenets have rendered necessary for our safety. Is it unreasonable to suggest then, that the British Roman Catholics might with more propriety apply for relief to the Court of Rome than to the British Parliament; and that, instead of agitating these kingdoms with their demands for political power, they would do well to petition the Head of their Church for a revision of the Creed of Pope Pius IV.?...for a removal of the restrictions which it imposes upon their understanding, their loyalty, and their conscience?...for emancipation from the moral and intellectual bondage in which it holds them?

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CREED OF POPE PIUS IV.

Now, Sir, for the rule which you suggest—THAT NO DOCTRINE SHOULD BE ASCRIBED TO THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AS A BODY, EXCEPT SUCH AS IS AN ARTICLE OF THEIR FAITH.

"Among the many misconceptions of their tenets," you say,* "of which the Roman Catholics have to complain, they feel none more than those which proceed from a want of the obser-

* Page 5.

vance of this rule. It is most true that the Roman Catholics believe the doctrines of their Church to be unchangeable; and that it is a tenet of their creed, that what their faith ever has been, such it was from the beginning, such it now is, and such it ever will be. But this proposition they confine to the articles of their faith; and they consider no doctrine to be of faith, unless it have been delivered by divine revelation, and propounded by the Roman Catholic Church as a revealed article of faith." You wish their adversaries to inquire, when they find in any Catholic writer a position which they think reprehensible, whether it be an article of Catholic faith, or the opinion of the individual writer; in the latter case you observe, that the general body of the Catholics is not responsible for it; in the former you require it to be carefully examined, whether it be the principle itself which they mean to impute to the Catholics, or a consequence which they themselves deduce from it; for these, you say, are widely different, and should never be confounded. You then prescribe the further inquiry, whether the principle (if it be principle that is attacked) has been propounded as an article of faith by the Church; and to ascertain this, you recommend, that the catechism of the

Council of Trent should be read; or, if the reader be not able to bestow upon that document the attentive study which it requires, you direct him to certain works of Bossuet, Mr. Gother, and Dr. Challoner. Should the doctrines with which the Romanists are charged be found, in terms or substance, in either of these works, it will then, you say, be incumbent on the Roman Catholics, either to show that the writer, in whose work it is found, was mistaken, or to admit that it is an article of faith; the Roman Catholics will then be justly chargeable with it, and with the consequences justly deducible from it. Whatever other opinions can be adduced, you add, though they be the opinions of their most respectable writers; though they be the opinions of the fathers of the Church; still they are but matters of opinion, and a Catholic may disbelieve them without ceasing to be a Catholic.

So far am I, Sir, from seeking to evade your argument, that I will enforce it by adding, in this place, the first article of the Rule of Faith taught at Maynooth College.

"The *total* and *only* Rule* of the Catholic Faith, to which all are obliged, under pain of

* Quoted in Columbanus ad Hibernos. No. 1. p. 17.

heresy and excommunication, is *Divine Revelation*, delivered to the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, and proposed by the *Catholic Church* in her *General* Councils, or by her *universal practice*, to be believed as an Article of *Catholic Faith*.

"No doctrine can be of faith, if either the *first* condition fail, to wit, *Divine Revelation;* or the *second*, which is its proposal as *an Article of Divine faith by the Universal Church*. Consequently, no doctrine, that has been introduced since the Apostles' times, even though miracles should have been wrought in confirmation of it, is to be believed with *Divine Faith:* nor any revelation made to any Saint since the Apostles' days, contained in the Lives of Saints: neither ought any miracle reported in their Legends to be believed as of faith, even though these miracles are related by most holy men, as St. Jerome, St. Athanasius, St. Augustin, St. Gregory the Great; nay, even though reported and approved by General Councils, or in Bulls of Canonization of Saints.

"The reason is this, that either *both* of the two conditions, or *one* of them, is wanting in all those instances. The Revelations are not made either to the *Prophets*, or to the *Apostles*, nor are the miracles performed by them."

To these rules, Sir, you would have a right to

appeal if the question were concerning your own belief, and that of those persons like yourself, who are, in truth, semi-reformed Roman Catholics. But their applicability to any thing which is written in the Book of the Church I utterly deny. That book is an outline of the Ecclesiastical History of England. It presents, not a statement of what the Church of Rome may just now be pleased to put forth as its theory, but an historical account of what has always been its practice. It represents its opinions as they have been embodied in its actions, as they have been exhibited in fire and written in blood. The principle upon which I proceeded in that work, and which I here re-assert, and will maintain, no argument can overthrow, no sophistry can elude. The Church of Rome is answerable for all those abuses, corruptions, and crimes, which it could have prevented, but never attempted to prevent; it is answerable for all that it permitted, all that it adopted, all that it sanctioned, all that it enjoined, whether it were acting from motives of cupidity or of ambition; for the purpose of replenishing its treasures and enriching its agents and dependents, or of extending and confirming its usurped dominion.

APPLICATION OF THE PRECEDING RULES TO THE CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SYSTEM IN THE BOOK OF THE CHURCH.

I am not entitled, you say,* to charge upon the Roman Catholics any doctrine which is not contained, or any practice for which a sanction is not found, in the Creed of Pius IV. the Council of Trent, the Catechism, or one of those works to which you refer as the acknowledged standard of an English Roman Catholic's belief. And you affirm, that as for any doctrines which may be found in other Roman Catholic books, if they are not contained in these, they are no more to be ascribed to the Church of Rome, than the opinions or practices of the Baptists, Unitarians, Quakers, Methodists, or any other Protestant sectaries are imputable to the Church of England. Here you take your stand, maintaining that, where I have charged upon the Romanists any practice and cannot produce, from the documents which you specify, the doctrine which prescribes, or sanctions, or excuses it; I am bound to retract the charge. You acknowledge that individual

* Page 12. † Ibid.

Catholics have maintained unjustifiable doctrines, and been guilty of unjustifiable practices; but you insist on the production of the tenet justly ascribable to the Catholic creed, to which any such doctrine or practice can fairly be attributed. You aver that no such tenet can be produced. You say that this alone answers every charge in the Book of the Church; that every charge not so *substantiated

"is but leather and prunello."

I deny the prunello! I protest against it! There is not a rag of it in the Book of the Church; though it must be admitted that it is, or rather was, in a certain sense, an ecclesiastical article, being, as Johnson explains it, "a kind of stuff of which the clergymen's gowns are made." It may have been (for I believe you might inquire for it in vain now among all the mercers in London) a flimsy manufacture;... in parliamentary language, I am free to confess it:..but, on the other hand, it may just as probably have been a good serviceable cloth of worsted, or of silk; and this I think you are bound in candour to admit when I remind you, that, though you have quoted Pope's words in the sense for which they are commonly quoted, the

* Page 14.

Poet used them* significantly, and never intended them to bear a flocci-naucical signification. Whether flimsy or substantial, however, I protest against the prunello! But if you insist upon it, that what I have said, and shall hereafter say, concerning those tenets and practices of the Papal Church for which I produce no citation from your select authorities, is but leather,...leather let it be. The article is a serviceable one; and I shall find good use for it when I come to deal with Monks and Friars,

* No line in the English language has been more frequently quoted, and certainly never was one more completely misapplied. Leather and prunello are used in apposition, just as cloth of frize and cloth of gold in the well-known bridal dress and motto of Charles Brandon: and why they are so used the preceding lines show.

> Fortune in men has some small difference made;
> One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade:
> The cobler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
> The Friar hooded, and the Monarch crown'd.
> What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl?
> I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.
> You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
> Or, cobler-like, the parson will be drunk,
> Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,
> The rest is all but leather or prunello.
>
> *Essay on Man.*

Prunello was probably so named from its colour, a dark purple, like what is called raven-gray.

with wonder-workers, and persecutors, and traitors.

What, Sir, are we to be told that, however the Roman Catholics may teach, and however they may act, they are to be charged only with what they please to avow? That the Papal Church is no more responsible for the doctrine of its Religious Orders, who are its embodied and sworn servants; than the Church of England is for those sectaries who are in open hostility to it? That Benedictinism, and Franciscanism, and Dominicanism, and Carmelitism, and Carthusianism, and Jesuitism, with their respective mythologies, their mummeries, and their superstitions, are no part of the Roman Catholic system? That the Roman Catholic Church is not more answerable for the romances of St. Francis and St. Dominic, and the whole legion of such Saints, than it is for the romances of the Round Table, or the Paladins, or the Amadis and Palmerin dynasties? Are we to be told, upon the authority of Veronius and Bossuet, and the Doctors at Maynooth, that the Roman Catholic Church canonizes Saints, dedicates churches to them, inserts their names in the Kalendar, introduces their legends into a form of service for their respective days, enjoins that they should be honoured and invocated, and that their images

and relics should be venerated, ... and yet is not answerable for the fables which it has thus sanctioned, adopted, and sanctified, and requires no belief in them? ... No belief in those things which it appoints to be read in churches? ... No belief in those to whom it erects altars? If this be not "to palter with us in a double sense," what is? Are we to be told that the Papal Church is not answerable for its acts and deeds; but only for such of its words as it thinks proper at this time to acknowledge? That it is not answerable for the crusade which it proclaimed against the Albigenses? for the Marian persecution? for the tragedy of St. Bartholomew's day? for the Inquisition? for the sufferings of the Vaudois? for the Irish massacre? and for the Dragonnades of Louis XIV.? Sir, it is to history that I look for what the Papal religion has manifested itself to be. I find its character in its actions. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall judge them."

AUTHORITIES.

Before this Introduction is brought to a close, it is proper that I should say something upon

what has been deemed, by friends as well as foes, a defect in the Book of the Church, ... the omission of all references. You call it, Sir, an avowed* plan of withholding from the reader the authorities for my assertions. What I said upon that subject, in the brief Advertisement prefixed to the book was, that references had not been given, because the scale was not one which would require or justify a display of research, but that there was not a single statement in those volumes which my collections would not enable me readily to authenticate. That in so saying, I neither deceived the public nor myself, the vindication on which I am about to enter will sufficiently demonstrate. But as the Book of the Church has been deemed a work of sufficient importance to obtain the special notice of the British Catholic Association, I will explain more fully the cause of that omission, by relating the rise and progress of the work itself.

Upon the first institution of the National Society for promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, and after the initiatory books which are used in its schools had been prepared, my excellent

* Page 31.

friend, Dr. Bell, who well understands the importance of training up children in the way they should go, and who knew what my feelings were upon that subject, asked me to compose a summary view of our Church history for the elder pupils. I easily promised what for the moment I thought might presently be done. But upon considering the matter, I soon perceived that it would be both easier and of more utility to extend the design, and compose such a compendium as might be a fit manual for our English youth: that is, for those (still happily the great majority) whose good fortune it is to be bred up in the principles of our two-fold constitution. Supposing that this might be accomplished in the compass of one little volume, I began: I lingered and brooded over it as I advanced, and as my collections increased; but regarding it always as an outline, and believing that the facts and views which it presented, must be familiar to all those who were well read in ecclesiastical history, I considered that a display of references would give the book an appearance of pretensions altogether inconsistent with its structure and purpose, that purpose remaining the same, though the composition had extended to four times the length of what had been designed.

I am not sorry that the references have been called for; nor that it should have been hinted to me, from a friendly quarter, that this is a point of more consequence to my reputation than I seemed to esteem it. The desire, on one part, that my statements should be authenticated, and the suspicion which is attempted to be cast upon them on the other, equally indicate that the Book of the Church has produced and is producing the effect for which it was intended. They prove also, (which is not to be observed without sorrowful concern,) that such a book was indeed wanted, if the history of our religious emancipation be so far forgotten, that a faithful statement of the corruptions and enormities from which it delivered us, can be received with surprise and doubt. As for the apprehended risk to my reputation, I must confess that it excited a smile. I have not been labouring in the quarries for thirty years, that I should build with untempered mortar, and upon sand, at last.

You are not unacquainted, I believe, Sir, with the most elaborate of my works, the History of Brazil. Some twelve or thirteen years ago I received a letter from an English merchant who had been travelling in that country, and had there met with the first volume, the only one which

had then been published. He had read it with general satisfaction; but the manner in which the Roman Catholic system is there spoken of, had given him some displeasure, for though of the reformed religion, he had been bred a Romanist. In the hope of discovering that I had misrepresented or exaggerated the facts, he traced me to my authorities, which in Brazil he had an opportunity of doing. They are given with great exactness, as the plan of such a work required; and the result of the inquiry convinced him so entirely of my perfect fidelity as an historian, that he wrote to tell me what he had done; and added that, having thus put my accuracy to the test, he had collected some materials, manuscript and printed, in the hope they might prove useful to me in the completion of the work. They were eminently so; and to this circumstance I am indebted for something more than the acquaintance of a gentleman whose attainments and character I equally respect.

Sir, if I wrote for party purposes, and merely with temporary views, I should be more solicitous to please some, and more careful not to offend others. My desire, as an historian, has ever been to represent all persons and all parties in the truest light, not in the strongest; neither dissembling the errors nor palliating

the offences of those whom I consider as entitled on the whole to the esteem and gratitude of posterity, nor withholding any thing that may abate our abhorrence for those who have rendered themselves infamous. I have always allowed full weight for those motives, however fallacious, by which good men are sometimes led astray, and even bad ones not unfrequently deceive themselves. Judging of actions by the immutable standard of right and wrong, I have endeavoured to judge of men according to the circumstances of their age, country, situation, and even time of life, glad to discover something which may extenuate the criminality of the agent, even when I pronounce the severest condemnation of the act. With this purpose, and in this temper, the Book of the Church was composed. But never will I affect a reputation for candour, (as that term is now abused,) by compromising principles of eternal importance; nor is that current *liberality* to be expected from me, which, if it does not act like a palsy upon the heart, taking from it all sense of indignation at what is base and atrocious, all feelings of admiration at what is virtuous and exalted, perverts its perceptions so as to make evil appear good and good evil.

LETTER I.

DIFFUSION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION.

THE object of your first letter, Sir, is to display "the* general diffusion of the Roman Catholic religion over the habitable globe, and the immense numerical superiority of its members over those of any Protestant Church, and even over those of all Protestant churches in the aggregate." Supposing that the survey on which your estimate is founded, were accurate†

* Page 15.

† Dr. Milner's geographical view of the Roman Catholic Church, on which Mr. Butler relies, will bear scrutiny as little as some other of the Vicar Apostolical's statements. He talks of many millions of converted Indians in South America. Where are they to be found? The Paraguay Reductions, in their most flourishing state, never contained 100,000 souls, and those of the Chiquitos did not reach to a fourth part of that number. He says that "the whole population of the Philippine Islands, consisting of two millions of souls, is all Catholic." This is easily said, and not so easily contradicted, because the means of information are not generally accessible. But I happen to know, on the authority of P. Fr. Juan Francisco de S. Antonio, the chronicler of the Barefooted Franciscans in that

in all points, what would it prove?...only that Seneca spake wisely when he said, *non tam bene cum rebus humanis agitur ut meliora pluribus placeant. Argumentum pessimi turba est.* You will yourself perceive how empty is this boast of a majority, if you call to mind that Mahommedanism extends over a wider portion of the earth than Popery, exceeding the Romish population more than that exceeds the Reformed; and that the heathen nations outnumber all together more than twice told.

But I intreat you, Sir, cast your eye again upon the statement which you have adopted, and ask yourself if Dr. Milner's exhibition of Siamese, and Tonquinese, and Chinese, and Cochin-Chinese converts,.....of his Zanguebar and Monomotapan churches,..with his Algerine, and Persian, and Ethiopian Roman Catholics, is not much in the style of the representation of the human race, as got up by their orator Anacharsis Clootz for the National Convention? But let this folly pass, and take those nations in the list which, as you say, are "in the highest

province, whose work was printed in his convent at Manila, in 1738, that there were at that time Moorish states in these islands under Moorish kings, and Pagans of as many kinds as shades of colour. And since that time the Spaniards have been in no condition either to extend their dominion or their faith.

state of intellectual advancement, and abound with persons from the very highest to the very lowest condition of life, of the greatest honour, endowment, and worth." Take, Sir, Italy and Spain, and Catholic Germany and France, and weigh them in the moral and intellectual balance with Great Britain, and the Protestant Swiss Cantons, and the North of Europe! And let not the Vaudois be forgotten, our elder brethren in the gospel, .. poor though they be, and few in numbers, yet by no Protestant to be remembered without admiration, nor mentioned without respect and gratitude.* Nor must our younger brethren beyond the Atlantic be overlooked, who are now co-operating with us in the great work of extending Christianity among the heathen, and spreading those Scriptures upon which it rests. Look, Sir, at the different scales! and see what have been the effects of the Romish and of the Protestant religion in their bearings upon public prosperity and upon private life. We of the Church which calls itself Reformed, and knows itself to be so, may,

* If the Protestant reader has not seen Mr. Gilly's "Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piemont, and Researches among the Vaudois," it will do his heart good to peruse that most interesting volume.

when we contemplate the difference, say, with our unrefuted and irrefutable apologist,* *satis jam dictam et defensam putamus esse caussam nostram; cumque res ipsa satis pro se loquatur non multum opus esse verbis.*

I marvel, Sir, at the imprudence of the comparison which you have invited. Walter Landor, whom I have pride as well as pleasure in calling my friend, says, "if we desire to know with certainty what religion is best, let us examine in what country are the best fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, wives; we shall there also find the best citizens, and of course the best Christians."†

But something more must be said before this letter is dismissed. You ask me "if it is decorous to speak of a religion which is professed in such extensive territories, as a prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness?". Even con-

* Juel. Apol. p. 13. edit. 1591.

† *Imaginary Conversations*, vol. i, p. 194. It cannot be necessary for me to say that there are points of importance in which my opinions differ widely from those which are expressed in these Dialogues. But I should be ashamed of myself were that consideration to withhold me from expressing my admiration of a book, which, for felicity and force both of conception and language, has rarely been equalled and never surpassed.

sidering the British Catholics alone, you tell me that their number "exceeds the number of any other denomination of his Majesty's Christian subjects throughout the empire, and that this entitles them to be treated with the language of decent controversy." "Confining the case to the English Catholics alone, you say even *they* are entitled to this decency of treatment." And, passing then to the first person, you add, "we are not the *vilia corpora* to whom the language which modern manners have banished from conversation should be applied."*

Here, Sir, I must express my astonishment at the tone which you have assumed. Very few of the Roman Catholics who peruse your book will have read mine, (mine, indeed, will appear in the next Index Expurgatorius, and then they will not be allowed to read it.) What, Sir, can they conclude from your representation, but that I have spoken of them in language the most insolent and offensive?..that I have trespassed not beyond the bounds of decorum only, but of decency also? and defiled my pages with terms which modern manners have banished from cultivated society? Is there any thing, Sir, so injurious to the English Romanists in my book as the insinuation which you have

* Page 18.

thus advanced is to me? Is there a paragraph in it, a sentence,* a word, an inference, or an implication which applies to them as a body, or reflects upon a single individual among them?

If I had published a controversial treatise, addressed to the Roman Catholics, and begun by telling them that the system in which they believed was a scheme of imposture and wickedness, such language might justly have been reprehended; it would have been imprudent, as tending certainly to excite an angry and vindictive spirit; and it would have been insolent, considering to whom it was directed. Had I made use of such terms in conversation with yourself, or any other persons of your persuasion, there would have been equally a want of good sense and of good manners in so doing. But in a view of the Church history of England, ... a book purely historical, and avowedly composed for the youth of this kingdom, that they might be trained up in the way they should go, and made in time to understand from what corruptions and evils the Reformation delivered their fathers, and how dearly the blessed deli-

* I say this with the single exception of a note relating to Dr. Lingard's remarks upon the trial of Lord Cobham. Vol. i. p. 379. To this subject I shall have occasion to revert in the course of these Letters.

verance was purchased: .. could I dream, Sir, that it would be called indecorous, .. that it would be represented as indecent, .. that I should be accused of treating the English Roman Catholics like *vilia corpora*, if in such a work I spake the sentiments and used the language of the Church of England?

It is not long since, happening to take up one of the numerous journals with which the press is swarming, I there found some mention of the Convocation, in allusion to a real or supposed expression of regret on my part for the disuse of that assembly, and the consequent loss of its wholesome restraints; upon which the editor observed that I seemed, "like many others, to forget that the Church of England *subsists by toleration* as much perhaps as those who dissent from her authority." Though not surprised either at the ignorance or the audacity of this remark, I thought it worth remembering. The tone of reprehension, Sir, which you have taken on this occasion, brings it to my recollection, and makes me ask whether indeed the times are such that the Church of England exists but by sufferance, and that he who records its history, or pleads its cause, must accommodate his language so as not to displease its enemies?

In speaking of the Papal System as a prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness, I stated in few words what had been more fully expressed by Burnet. "Learn," says that prelate,* "to view Popery in a true light as a conspiracy to exalt the power of the clergy, even by subjecting the most sacred truths of religion to contrivances for raising their authority, and by offering to the world another method of being saved, besides that prescribed in the gospel. Popery is a mass of impostures, supported by men who manage them with great advantages, and impose them with inexpressible severities on those who dare call any thing in question that they dictate to them." When you reprehend me thus unwarrantably for my language concerning the Papal System, you† instance Barrow's Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy as one model of the manner in which controversy should be carried on between scholars and gentlemen. The design of Barrow's Treatise was to prove the falsehood of all those arguments upon which the Papal supremacy was maintained; and what is his language?

* Conclusion to the History of his own Times, vol. iv. p. 400. ed. 1815.

† Book of the R. C. Church, 49.

"Upon supposition of its falsehood," he says, (which falsehood, be it remembered, he had engaged to demonstrate, and was demonstrating,) "the Pope and his chief adherents are the teachers and abettors of the highest violation of divine commands and most enormous sins; of usurpation, tyranny, imposture, perjury, rebellion, murder, rapine, and all the villanies complicated in the practical influence of their doctrine."* This, Sir, is from that *learned treatise*, (and most truly have you so called it,) which you have instanced as an example of the proper kind of controversy. Yet neither Burnet nor Barrow was reproached for having insulted the English Romanists. The Roman Catholic reader knew that they had written as Protestants, and as it became Protestants to write. No personal offence could be intended, and none was taken.

You have yourself, Sir, written Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish, and Scottish Roman Catholics; and though three editions have been published, I do not know that a single remonstrance (not to say reproach) has ever been made against you for the accusations you have there advanced against the English Church, its

* Barrow's Theological Works, vol. vi. p. 27. ed. 1818.

founders, and its martyrs, in words which, though "softer than butter," and "smoother than oil," are yet intended to be "very swords."

But what is written in the Book of the Church requires no precedents to justify it, nor is any apology to be made for it. I have said it, and shall repeat it, and will maintain it. It was said in its proper place, and with its proper proofs. I expressed what I believed and knew to be true,..knew it with the sober certainty of one who was writing upon a subject into which he had long and diligently inquired. It was fully borne out by the view there given of the Papal System,..a view which, in all its parts, I am prepared to vindicate and authenticate. I stated the facts which rendered our Reformation necessary; and in so doing I expressed the sentiments which the Church of England professes and inculcates, which I believe with all my heart and with all my soul, and which I will defend with all my strength.

The Romanists are offended if the Papal System is called a system of imposture. The Protestants are not offended when they are called Heretics by the Papists; they receive the appellation just as they would that of Dogs or Kaffers from the Moors. They are not galled by it, because "their withers are unwrung."

LETTER II.

FIRST INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

CONCERNING the introduction of Christianity among the Britons, the documents are scanty, and, by your own admission, questionable. But "it seems difficult," you say, "to deny that they favour the Catholic doctrine of the Pope's Supremacy, and his right of general superintendence over the spiritual concerns of the Church of Christ." To so qualified a mode of insinuating an opinion, it is sufficient to reply that it would be bold to assert, and impossible to prove it. And with this I conclude a letter which may remind the reader of the Chapter concerning Owls in Horrebow's Natural History of Iceland.

LETTER III.

THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

We come now to the Anglo-Saxons. "The Apostles' Creed," you say, "was taught among them as it is now taught to us. How large a proportion of the articles of their and our faith are contained in this venerable document!"* Yes, Sir; and if the Popes had added nothing to those articles, there would have been no division in the Western Church.

You proceed to say that "the doctrines of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors respecting the supremacy of the Pope; the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist; the seven sacraments; the invocation of the Virgin Mary and the other Saints, and prayers for the dead, were the same as ours,"...that is of the English Romanists at this time. A distinction must be made here: the Anglo-Saxons received from Rome all the corruptions which had then been introduced into the Romish system; but the most monstrous of the Papal doctrines had not yet been

* Page 28.

broached. The temporal supremacy of the Pope had not been dreamt of; and the opinion which was held concerning the real presence in the Eucharist, was that which the Church of England professes at this day. For transubstantiation had not then been invented.

You ask those who are conversant with the writings of Bede, "*whether the Gospel inculcates a single duty, or recommends a single practice, which does not appear to have been taught and recommended by the Apostles of the Anglo-Saxons and their successors?" I answer that the missionaries, by whom our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were converted, and the successors of those missionaries, most assuredly did inculcate the practices and duties which the Gospel enjoins: they did this as Christians; but it is not less certain that, as Romish Christians, they introduced as practices, and inculcated as duties, observances concerning which the Gospel is altogether silent; all of them unauthorized by its letter or its spirit, and some in plain contradiction to both.

Of this more fully hereafter. I am called upon to notice here the misrepresentation concerning St. Eligius, which Dr. Lingard has detected, and which you †have brought forward in the strongest light. The fact is as you have stated

* Page 30. † Page 33.

it; there has been a gross misrepresentation, and I should express myself concerning it not less indignantly than you have done, if upon due examination I had not perceived that it was evidently unintentional, and in what manner it had arisen. It originated with Mosheim, an author whose erudition it would be superfluous to commend, and to whose fidelity, as far as my researches have lain in the same track, I can bear full testimony. Contrasting in his text the primitive Christians with those of the seventh century, he says, * "the *former* taught that Christ by his sufferings and death had made atonement for the sins of mortals; the *latter* seemed by their superstitious doctrine to exclude from the kingdom of heaven such as had not contributed by their offerings to augment the riches of the clergy or the church." And in support of this statement he adduces, in a note, the passages from St. Eligius, wherein that prelate exhorts his hearers to redeem their own souls by offering gifts and tithes to the churches, presenting lights to the sacred places in their neighbourhood, and making oblations to the altar, that at the last day they might appear securely before the tribunal of the Eter-

* English Translation, vol. ii. p. 21. 2d edition.

nal Judge, and say, "Give unto us, O Lord, for we have given unto thee!" You, Sir, who know so well the history of the mortmain laws need not be told to what an extent the clergy at one time abused their influence over the minds of men, for the purpose of increasing their own possessions. The passage from Eligius is strictly in point to the assertion in the text; and Mosheim cannot justly be accused of garbling the original, because he has not shown that these exhortations were accompanied with others to the practice of Christian virtues. To have done this would have been altogether irrelevant; but by not doing it he has misled his translator, who, supposing that St. Eligius had required nothing more than liberality to the church from a good Christian, observes that he makes no mention of any other virtues. The misrepresentation on his part was plainly unintentional, and it was equally so in Robertson, who followed him; and however censurable both may be for commenting thus hastily upon an extract without examining the context, Mosheim is clearly acquitted* of all blame.

* So he would be even if his quotations had been made from a connected discourse of St. Eligius, left by that Saint in writing, and his own undoubted work; ... as I supposed it to have been when the text was written, not having then perused the

When the German historian afterwards asserts that the Christians of that century placed the whole of religion in external rites and bodily exercises, he speaks not of the priesthood exclusively, but of the whole body of the people; and he is not chargeable with error even, still less with calumny, because particular instances might be adduced as exceptions to what is generally true.

Beyond all doubt Christian morality has been

discourse in question. But the fact is that they are *fragments taken from a collection of fragments,*...from what Eligius's biographer, St. Audoenus, gives as the substance of his sermons,...*hujusce modi ad eos proferebat monita,* (Vita S. Eligii. Acta SS. Belgii Selecta. t. iii. p. 243.)—the sum of that biographer's notes or recollections—*quem Audoenus e variis Eligii monitis contexuit.* (Ghesquiere. Ibid. 262.) And Eligius himself made up his sermons of shreds and patches from elder writers, especially from St. Cæsarius,..*ea tamen quæ ibi profert Eligius traxit penè omnia ex Cæsarianis sermonibus, quæ per Galliam universam, et per Hispanias procurante Cæsario (scilicet Arelatensi episcopo) in ecclesiis lectitabantur.* (Ibid. 262.) Smet also, in his Analecta Eligiana (Ibid. 315) says, *neque ægrè feramus quod* Rhapsodia *vocentur, et* farrago consarcinata *ex Augustino, Prospero, &c.; cum id Apostolo nostro æternæ laudi vertatur, quod non tantum in Diœcesibus Noviomensi et Tornacensi idololatriam et paganorum superstitiones insectatus fuerit, verum etiam quod in docendis populis constanter antiquiorum Patrum doctrinæ inhæserit, datoque exemplo caverit ne quis è posteris Scripturam sacram spiritu privato interpretetur.*

inculcated by all Christian ministers in all ages. It has been preached by all sects. However erroneous their doctrine, however discommendable their practice, however gross their misconception of the most important truths, all who have either believed themselves to be Christians, or who have assumed the cloak of Christianity for worldly purposes, have concurred in preaching the fundamental principles and the morality of the Gospel. And God forbid that I should think so unhappily of his dispensations, and of my fellow creatures, as not to believe that these morals and that fundamental faith have, even in the worst ages, greatly counterbalanced the injurious effects of the false opinions and superstitious usages with which they have been connected. When those corruptions became so gross that their effect must have predominated, if they had been permitted to proceed unchecked, the Reformation in the order of Providence was brought about. And whereas you demand whether purer lessons of morality can be cited than were inculcated in the Anglo-Saxon times, I answer that the same morality is purer when preached, as it now is in all reformed countries, without the alloy that in those ages debased it. Your other question,

"whether the institutions in which it was taught, and without which it might not have been taught, were not, with all the imperfections justly or unjustly imputed to them, eminently useful," requires no answer from me, who have on every occasion acknowledged their utility.

But you have mentioned Bede. The very introduction of that venerable name is like proclaiming a truce. Willingly and reverently, Sir, do I affix to it the appellation which he so eminently deserved; and gladly take occasion to supply what would have been a culpable omission in the Book of the Church, if the design and scale of that work had admitted of all that it was desirable to insert. In vindicating the book from the unwarrantable aspersions which are cast upon it, it will not be irrelevant for me to enlarge upon certain points which could only be cursorily noticed there; and what may at first appear digressive, will be found in the end to bear upon the question.

Life is not long enough for any one in these days to be *conversant* with the writings of Bede. Indeed it would be a waste of time for any person to peruse them all, unless it were his intention to compose a full biographical and

critical account of this most extraordinary man, who was the light and wonder of his age. They fill eight folio volumes, which are usually bound in three, and contain more matter than would be comprised in twenty modern quartos. The historical portion is but a small part, one volume of the eight. This I have perused; of the rest I have read such parts only as attracted notice in a cursory inspection of the whole.

THE VENERABLE BEDE. ST. BENEDICT BISCOP.

Bede was born about the year 670 in the tract of country between the mouths of the Wear and the Tyne, and upon the estate belonging to the united monasteries of St. Peter and St. Paul, the one situated at the mouth of the Wear on the north side, the other on a bay of the Tyne, which then formed the principal port of the Northumbrian Kings, but having been choked with sand is now left dry when the tide recedes, and is at present known by the name of Jarrow Slake. At the age of seven, having lost both his parents, who were probably tenants or vassals of the estate, he was placed by his relations in one of these religious houses.

These monasteries had then recently been founded by Benedict Biscop. Biscop, for that was his name before he engaged in a monastic order, was a person who contributed greatly to the advancement of his countrymen in those arts, which existed at that time only in connection with religious establishments. He was born in the household of the Northumbrian king Oswy, nephew to that Edwin whose con-

version to Christianity has been so fully and authentically recorded. Oswy had given him lands suitable to his extraction, for he was of noble family; but in those days there was little in the pursuits of secular ambition which could tempt a generous mind; and Biscop, at the age of five-and-twenty, forsook his patron's court to visit Rome, which in the West was regarded as the capital not of Christendom alone, but of civilization also. Having satisfied his curiosity, but not his sense of devotion, he took the habit at Lerins, a monastery situated in an island at the mouth of the Rhone, and then in the highest celebrity. After a while he returned to Rome by sea, and was residing in that city when an Anglo-Saxon priest arrived there whom Egbert, the Oiscinga of Kent, had sent to be consecrated for the see of Canterbury, desiring to have one of his own subjects for Archbishop who might instruct the people without the medium of an interpreter. The Primate elect died of the plague presently after his arrival; and Pope Vitalian, making choice of Theodore of Tarsus in his stead, ordered Benedict Biscop to accompany him as his linguist. Benedict (as he must henceforth be called) remained at Canterbury with the charge of St. Peter's monastery, as long as his presence was required; he then

made a third journey to Rome, and returned again to England with a good collection of books, in part purchased, in part given him by his friends at Rome and at Vienne. He brought also a rich assortment of relics of the Apostles as well as of the Martyrs; and having made himself well acquainted with the rites and observances of ecclesiastic and monastic discipline, he came with the hope of introducing here the ceremonies of those more cultivated nations among whom he had resided. This he had expected to effect in Wessex, one of the most flourishing kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon polyarchy; but Kenwalch the King, upon whose friendship he had counted, was just at that time slain in battle, upon which Benedict repaired to his native country, and presented himself at the Northumbrian court. Egfrid, who had succeeded his father Oswy, received him as one whose worth he knew, and giving him what was called a possession of seventy* families, directed him to build a monastery there in honour of St. Peter.†

* Probably what would a little later have been called seventy plough-lands,... but it may also not improbably mean that land was given with all the families upon it.

† Not having the *Vitæ Abbatum Wiremuthensium et Gerwiensium*, which Sir James Ware published (Dublin, 1664) as the work of Bede, till then supposed to be lost, I write from those

Having built the monastery where Monks Wearmouth now stands, Benedict embarked for France, and brought from thence masons to erect a stone church for it, according to the Roman style. The building cannot have been of any great extent, for it was completed within the compass of a year, but it was the first edifice in this island in which glass was used. He sent for glaziers from France to make windows for the Church and upper galleries, and the art of making glass* was introduced at the same time;

parts of it which Cressy has translated and incorporated in his Church History of Brittany, as he chuses to call Britain. And that I may not be charged with withholding any thing that may seem to favour the Romanists in any of their pretensions, I notice here that St. Peter is called in this place "the Supreme Pastor of the Church."

* Fuller is mistaken in supposing that it was *painted* glass which he introduced. "He left religion in England," says this author, "*braver*, but not *better* than he found it. Indeed what Tully said of the Roman lady, 'that she danced better than became a modest woman,' was true of God's service, as by him adorned; its *gaudiness* prejudicing the *gravity* thereof. He made all things according, not to the *Pattern in the Mount*, with Moses, but the *Precedent of Rome;* and his Convent, being but the Romish Transcript, became the English Original, to which all monasteries in the land were suddenly conformed. In a word, I reverence his memory not so much for his first bringing over painted glass into England, as for his first bringing up pious Bede in his monastery."

Worthies, vol. ii. p. 497. ed. 1811.

"being very commodious for lamps and other vessels useful in the Church." Whatever was required for the service of the altar or the adornment of the Church, if it was not to be obtained at home, he imported from abroad; a proof that the means wherewith his royal patron supplied him were abundant. Not satisfied while any thing was wanting to that standard of perfection at which he aimed, he made a fourth journey to Rome, and brought back more relics and more books; some images, and one John who was Abbot of St. Martin and Precentor of St. Peter's Church, to introduce the Roman singing in his monastery, and instruct his monks in the forms of the ritual throughout the year, as they were observed at Rome. He obtained also, by King Egfrid's desire, a brief exempting the monastery from "all outward usurpations and oppressions,"...in other words, from episcopal jurisdiction.

Egfrid, perceiving how well his wishes for the improvement of the country were forwarded by Benedict, gave him another possession of forty families, on which he built the monastery of Gerwy, now called *Jarrow, which he dedi-

* I am not inclined to doubt that this Treatise concerning the Abbots of Weremouth is the work of Bede, which we know from his own authority that he had written, and which was supposed to be lost. But if Cressy is an accurate translator, there occurs a passage here which Bede could not have written.

cated to St. Paul, and united under the same rule and economy with the former. The indefatigable traveller made one more journey to Rome, and returned* with more books and a great collection of pictures, one series representing the whole life of our Saviour in compartments enough to go round the church of the larger monastery. Jarrow was adorned with a set painted from the Old and New Testaments, the subjects of which were so selected and disposed that the type and antitype might be

It is stated that the first monastery was built on the north side of the Wear, which was the fact, and that the second was "on the opposite side of the same river," the former at Wearmouth, and the other at Gerwy, (*Cressy*, p. 451.) It is not possible that he could have written thus erroneously concerning the place where he lived, and the only part, not merely of the world, but of his own country, that he had ever seen.

I see no means of accounting for this error. Nevertheless I believe the Treatise to be Bede's, and for a reason which is honourable to him. The Abbots of Wearmouth had all been persons of his own time, whom he had lived with and known well. He wrote therefore concerning them not upon hearsay, but upon his own knowledge; and though his History is stuffed with miracles, there are none here. In the greater work he related what he heard, in this what he knew. Upon this subject I have more to observe hereafter.

* He brought home also "two mantles all of pure silk of inestimable work, for which he had in exchange from King Alfred and his counsellors (for before his return King Egfrid was slain) a possession of three families, lying southward to the mouth of the river Wear."—*Cressy*, p. 453.

exhibited opposite to each other: Isaac, for example, bearing the wood for the sacrifice, and our Saviour bearing his cross; the Brazen Serpent and the Crucifixion. These he imported not merely to ornament the Church, but also as means for instructing* the people in the history of their faith.

This Benedict Biscop, who was in process of time canonized, and who deserves to be gratefully remembered among the benefactors of our nation, was the person to whom the child Bede was delivered. Had it not been for Bede we should not now have known for what we are indebted to Benedict; and for nothing are we so greatly beholden to him as for having provided his monasteries with those literary treasures, (in his days beyond all price,) without which Bede could have had no means of instruction. Without those means the talents of this wonderful man must have remained unim-

* *Apportavit,...picturas sanctarum historiarum, quæ non ad ornatum solummodò ecclesiæ, verum etiam ad instructionem intuentium proponerentur, advexit; videlicet, ut qui litterarum lectione non possent, opera Domini et Salvatoris nostri per ipsarum contuitum discerent imaginum.* Acta SS. Jan. t. i. p. 746. Bede's Homily upon St. Benedict Biscop's birth-day, which is there given, I cannot find among his works, in the Cologne edition of 1612—that which I use.

proved, and that large portion of the Anglo-Saxon history which is derived from him would have been lost. Benedict transferred the boy to Ceolfrid, the Abbot of Jarrow, and from that monastery Bede never departed during the whole course of his long, innocent, and meritorious life.

The latter days of Benedict, whom he must have regarded as something more than a spiritual father, were marked by circumstances likely to make a deep impression on a devout and gentle heart. Benedict was stricken with palsy. "All the lower members of his body were deprived of motion and life, and the upper parts, without which life could not consist,* were reserved free for the exercise of his patience."† In this state he lingered three years, the body half dead, but the mind retaining its strength and serenity. To render the long hours of sleepless nights less wearisome, he used to have portions of Scripture read to him by one of his monks, selecting parts suited to his own sad condition, such as the story of Job's sufferings and patience. It was not possible

* "Being struck beneath the girdle with the dead palsy," says Fuller, "his soul retired into the upper room of his clay cottage." (Worthies, vol. ii. p. 497.)

† Cressy, p. 453.

for him to attend the quire; and when he grew weaker and was no longer able, without great exertion and pain, to go through the psalms in their appointed order, certain of the monks attended in his chamber, at canonical hours; and while they chaunted the service, he accompanied them orally as long as his strength sufficed, and in spirit when that failed. His coadjutor Sigfrid was dying at the same time of some consuming inward malady. They wished to have an interview, as well to consult concerning the affairs of the united monasteries, which they could no longer administer themselves, as to bid each other a last earthly adieu. Sigfrid therefore was carried in a coffin* into the chamber where Benedict lay in his bed; he was placed on the bed beside him, with his head on the same pillow; and even then, such was the extreme debility of both, that they could not join their lips to give and receive the last kiss of Christian love without assistance from the weeping beholders.

With Sigfrid's advice, and with the consent of all the monks of the united monasteries, Benedict proposed Ceolfrid as his successor,

* It is remarkable that the affecting circumstances of this interview are not noticed in Mr. Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints.

and in consequence he was unanimously chosen. Disposition, not less than education, had fitted Bede for that way of life to which it had pleased God to call him. At the age of nineteen, in obedience to Ceolfrid's orders, he was ordained Deacon by John,* Bishop of Hagulstad, the name whereby Hexham was then known. It was not till his thirtieth year that he received Priest's orders from the same prelate. Thus much he has related of himself, and the even tenour of his unvarying life afforded no other events to be recorded; for that Pope Sergius,

* Afterwards St. John of Beverley, famous for the annual miracle which used to be exhibited upon a Bull in his churchyard. In Folcard's life of this Saint (Acta SS. May 7th) he is said to have been Bede's preceptor. The passage contains a notable example of the contempt in which the Normans held the nations of this island, for he says of Bede that, *à tanto pœdagogo affluenter imbutus... inditam Britannicæ gentis hebitudinem purgavit,* (p. 169.) There is reason for suspecting that this statement was made for the sake of giving John the credit of such a pupil, with little or no foundation in fact. For he appears to have itinerated as a preacher, (*Capgrave quoted by Crossy,* p. 464) before he was appointed to his see; he is no where mentioned as ever having resided at Jarrow, and Bede is known never to have resided any where else; ... and what may be considered as decisive, Bede, who inserts an account of him in his Ecclesiastical History, and relates several of his miracles, never speaks of him as his tutor, though he says that he was ordained by him.

wishing to have the benefit of his counsel upon certain ecclesiastical affairs, invited *him to Rome, is doubtful; and it is certain that he did not go. "From seven years old," he says, "when I was given to the most reverend Abbot Benedict to be brought up, and afterwards to Ceolfrid, passing all my life in this monastery, I bestowed all my labour in meditating upon the scriptures, and the observance of regular discipline; and the daily business of singing in the church. And I found it delightful always either to teach, or to learn, or to write. From the time of my receiving the order of priesthood to the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have employed myself in noting briefly these things from the works of the venerable Fathers for the use of myself and my pupils, and in adding something to their interpretations."

This modest account would have rendered little justice to his labours, if he had not annexed to it a list of the treatises which he had then composed. His historical and biographical works are in this catalogue: his commentaries on the Bible, his homilies, his hymns and epigrams, and his treatises on the nature of things, on the divisions of time, orthography, the art

* Acta SS. Maii, t. vi. p. 720.

of metre, and the tropes and figures used in Scripture. His other works therefore must have been composed afterwards. They are upon grammar; upon numeration and arithmetic,.. and here he gives the *Abacus* or multiplication tables of Pythagoras, and a collection of arithmetical questions such as are now found in those elementary books which propose problems of this kind in an entertaining form. There is a series of calculating tables, a treatise upon weights and measures, and another upon the lunar motions. There is an Ephemeris most laboriously calculated: an ignorant eye* may perceive how much head-work its diagrams and tables must have cost; but it would require no common proficiency in science to ascertain their accuracy, and estimate from them the degree of knowledge in those branches to which Bede had attained. There are computations for the Kalendar, and tables in which Easter is calculated from the commencement of the Christian era to the year 1595. He wrote also

* There could not, indeed, be a fitter book for a fortune-teller to set up with than the first volume of Bede. A simple fellow seeing a rogue turn over its pages gravely as if he were consulting them, might very well suppose, that the person who understood that could understand any thing.

upon indigitation, both as an art of computing by the fingers,* and of conversing by them;

* The former art must have arisen as soon as men had any occasion to make use of numbers. That it was in use among the Persians we learn from Plutarch; and one reason why Janus was supposed to represent the Sun, was, that his image was formed as making with his fingers the number of the days in the year. But the mention of the latter by Bede, shows that Calmet was misled by his authorities when he said that it arose in the Cluniac and Cistercian convents, where it was invented as a device for conversing, without breaking silence. The passage in Calmet's Commentary, however, contains some curious information, respecting the fooleries and practices of monkery, and therefore I give it at length :—

"*Pour marquer le respect qu'on avoit pour le silence, on inventa dans l'Ordre de Cluny, dans celui de Cîteaux,*† *et dans d'autres monastères, des signes de la main et des doigts, pour se faire entendre sans parler; pratique qui s'est renouvellée de nos jours dans quelques Abbayes réformées de Cîteaux comme à Orval, à la Trappe, et à Beaupré. Nous avons d'anciens Recueils de ces signes imprimez en divers endroits, et l'on a prétendu que par ce moyen on évitoit les grands inconvéniens, qui naissent du violement du silence, et de l'usage de la parole, étant impossible, quelque versé qu'on soit dans l'usage de ces signes arbitraires, de lier une conversation suivie, et de s'entretenir, par exemple, de nouvelles, avec leurs circonstances, qui font le sujet ordinaire de nos discours.*

"*Le Concile de Château-Gonthier can.* 24. *exhorte les Religieux à garder le silence, et il recommande aux Abbez de leur faire apprendre l'usage des signes :* Abbates provideant quod monachi

† Vide Bernardi Cluniac. Ordo Cluniac. l. i. c. 17. et Sancti Vuillelmi Constitutiones Hirsaug. c. 6. 7. 8. &c. apud R. P. Marquard. Relig. Bened. Sancti Blasii in Sylvâ Nigrâ.

upon chronology, dialling, the astrolabe, the poles, and the circles of the sphere, music

sibi subditi sciant signa facere. *Abaëlard* recommande aussi les signes, et veut que l'on s'en serve au lieu des paroles, dans les lieux principalement consacrez au silence, comme sont l'Oratoire, le Dortoir, le Cloître, le Réfectoire. La Règle des Templiers leur permet de demander à voix basse dans le Réfectoire, ce qui leur est nécessaire, parce que parmi eux l'usage des signes n'étoit pas établi. Tout cela prouve le cas que l'on faisoit dans les Cloîtres de cette pratique.*

" *Il est vrai que par le moyen de ces signes, on peut se parler de loin et tromper la vigilance des Supérieurs, qui croyent que l'on demeure dans un profond silence, pendant que réellement on se parle par signes, et qu'on se communique ses pensées, ses passions, et ses mouvemens, et cela bien souvent avec plus de facilité et de danger qu'on ne feroit par paroles, qui ne peuvent si aisément se faire entendre de loin, ni se dérober si facilement à l'attention des Supérieurs et des autres Religieux, dont la crainte et le respect contiennent ceux qui voudroient s'émanciper à parler en des tems et dans des lieux où il n'est pas permis de le faire ; au lieu que deux personnes de cent pas se peuvent parler par signes sans être apperçues.*

" *Le Vénérable Guigue dans les †Statuts qu'il a dressez pour les Chartreux ne paroît pas fort prévenu en faveur de ces signes; c'est bien assez, dit il, d'employer la langue à se faire entendre, sans faire servir d'autres membres :* sufficere putantes linguam solam, non etiam cæteros artus implicare loquendo."—*Calmet, Commentaire sur la Règle de S. Benoist,* t. i. p. 224.

It is quite certain that Bede never dreamt of introducing finger-speech as a monastic practice. His words are, " *potest autem et de ipso quem prænotavi computo, quædam manualis lo-*

* Abaëlard, Ep. 8. p. 130, 135. † Guig. Stat. c. 3. 1.

theoretical and practical, nativities, venesection, the elements, the planets, and the constellations. He had attained some knowledge of Greek, a little of Hebrew. It was said of him, that though living in the remotest corner of the earth, he had compassed the whole in the range of his acquirements; in fact, he had acquired, whatever in those days and in his situation could be learnt; and Bede may more truly be said to have been master of the whole circle of human knowledge, than Alexander has been called conqueror of the world.

One of his treatises is upon the signification of thunder, in different months and upon the different days of the week. This he translated from the common tongue into Latin, at the desire of Herenfrid. The treatise itself is curious, as an authentic register of the popular, or rather learned superstitions on this subject, which

quela, tam ingenii exercendi, quam ludi agendi gratiâ figurari; quâ literis quis singillatim expressis verba, quæ iisdem literis contineantur, alteri qui hanc quoque noverit industriam, tametsi procul posito, legenda atque intelligenda contradat; vel necessaria quoque per hæc occultius innuendo significans, vel imperitos quousque quasi divinando deludens.—t. i. 137.

The example which he gives may perhaps indicate the insecurity of the times in which he lived: it is a warning to be conveyed to a friend when he is *inter insidiatores*; "cautè age."

then prevailed. The epistle to Herenfrid, which accompanies it, is more so; for Bede speaks of the task which this father had imposed upon him as a dangerous one, and entreats his protection against those who would malign him as a proficient in the black art for meddling with such prognostications. From the manner in which he* expresses himself, it appears, that he was as obnoxious to acrimonious and malignant criticism as if he had lived in the nineteenth century.

The greater portion of his works consists of commentaries upon the scriptures, partly original, but for the most part drawn from those fathers with whose writings Benedict Biscop had provided the united monasteries. Those upon the Epistles of St. Paul were collected from St. Augustine's works, and digested into this order, an undertaking which required

* *Verumtamen subnixis precibus flagito, ut contra invidos, qui vel canino dente hoc opusculum corrodere aut subsannare conaturi sunt, vel quasi latrantes cancs adversùm me rabido ore desævient, quique in eo se doctos esse arbitrantur si aliis detrahant; orationum vestrarum clipeos opponatis, et anchora sancti sermonis vestri, fideliumque vestrorum, hoc opusculum, ex sermone à fideli vestro in Latinum translatum, omnimodis ab invidorum inimicorumve detractionibus, stabilitum atque illæsum permanere faciatis.* t. i. 379.

great diligence and labour. Bede himself was fond of extracting an allegorical meaning wherever it could be found or fancied; a mode of interpretation which tempts an active and excursive mind; and without which, he thought there were many parts of the Old Testament which would not tend to *edification. In venturing, however, upon this task, he placed no reliance, he said, upon his own ability, but confided in assistance from above, and in the †prayers of his friend Acca, Bishop of Hagulstad, at whose request most of these commentaries were undertaken. If, according to his desire,

* *Nam si vetera tantummodo de thesauro Scripturarum proferre, hoc est, solas literæ figuras sequi Judaico more curamus, quid inter quotidiana peccata correptionis, inter crebrescentes ærumnas seculi consolationis, inter innumeros vitæ hujus errores spiritalis doctrinæ legentes, vel audientes, acquirimus, dum aperto libro, verbi gratiâ, beati Samuelis, Elcanam virum unum duas uxores habuisse reperimus? nos maximè, quibus ecclesiasticæ vitæ consuetudine longè fieri ab uxoris complexu, et cœlibes manere propositum est: si non etiam de his et hujusmodi dictis allegoricum noverimus exsculpere sensum, qui vivaciter interius castigando, erudiendo, consolando reficit? Unde tuo crebro, dilectissime et desiderantissime omnium qui in terris morantur antistitum, Acca, provocatus hortatû, tuis fretus orationibus, memorati Prophetæ, qui tunc vocabatur Videns, scripta perlustrans, si quid donante illo qui ei multa spiritalia dedit videre, spiritale ac mysticum poteram contueri, literis mandare curabo.*—In Sam. Proph. t. iv. 168.

† t. iv. 246.

he said, these his labours should be found profitable to many, it was his hope, that, together with those whom he had thus profited, he should himself receive many things in reward from the Lord: but, even were it otherwise, the labour would not be in vain, seeing that it would have preserved him from idleness, and from all vain things during the time in which he had been thus* employed.

That Bede delighted in his occupation is certain; no man would have undertaken and persevered through such tasks, unless he had found a reward in the labour itself. He says, that because the annotations of the fathers were so copious that they could be obtained by none but the rich, and so profound that they could be understood by the learned only, Acca had charged him to gather from their writings, as from the fields of paradise, such things as might be serviceable for the feeble. Yet he entered upon these long compilations with a feeling of dismay† at the labour which they required, and when he had finished one of them‡ felt like a man who lays down a heavy burden,

* Ib. 168.

† *Operis immensitate perterritus.*—t. v. 625.

‡ *Tandem relevatus laboriosæ explanationis onere, ac veluti deposito grave fasce respirans.*—t. iv. 633.

having reached his place of rest. It appears also that though Bede had no temporal cares to distract his attention, the cloister, even in those early days, was not always the abode of peace. Convents had their politics and their intrigues as well as courts, ... perhaps more of them in that age; and the election of an Abbot was more frequently a matter of contention than the succession to a kingdom. He complains of such affairs, both as interrupting his *studies, and disturbing the rest† which he would some-

* t. v. 625. *Obstrepentium causarum (quas tu melius nosti) necessitate præpeditus*: He is addressing Bishop Acca.

† "*Tertio in beatum Samuelem completo volumine, putabam me aliquandiu reparatâ per quietum meditandi vel scribendi voluptate, sic demum ad inchoationem quarti manum esse missurum. Verum hæc eadem mihi quies, si tamen quies dicenda est, inopinata mentis anxietas, prolixior multo quàm decreveram, novâ circunstantium rerum mutatione pervenit; màximè discessu Abbatis mei reverendissimi, qui post longam monasterialis curæ observantiam, subitus Romam adire, atque inter loca beatorum Apostolorum ac Martyrum Christi corporibus sacra, extremum senex halitum reddere disponendo, non parvâ commissorum sibi animos, et eo majore, quo improvisâ conturbatione stupefecit. Sed qui Moysi longævo ab humanis rebus tollendo Jesus Naue in ducatum, qui Eleazarum in sacerdotium Aaron patri substituit, ipse provecto ætate Ceolfrido, ad beatorum Apostolorum limina sancta properanti, Huetberthum juvenem, cui amor studiumque pietatis jam olim Eusebii cognomen indidit, ad regendas sacerdotio ducatuque spiritali fidelium animas Abbatis vice substituit. Ejusdemque substitutionis gradum post elec-*

times fain have allowed himself, in order that his mind might come refreshed and with recovered vigour to new undertakings.

When Bede was advanced in years, he composed a Book of Retractations, after the example of St. Augustine; . . it might have been well for the world if the Saint had been more frequently followed in this than in some of his opinions. Bede's book applies only to his Commentary upon the Acts of the Apostles, and consists chiefly of such criticisms as a comparison of the original with the Latin versions enabled him to make. But he* warns the reader to take these remarks merely as critical observations, for which they are offered; and he requests him not to insert any of them in his own book as emendations, unless he should find them supported by some older manuscript of the Latin. In another of his †works he requests, that whosoever may think it worth while to transcribe it, will carefully preserve the marginal notations.

In such labours the whole of his long life was

tionem fraternam suâ per tuum, dilectissime Antistes, officium benedictione confirmavi. Redeunte temporum statu tranquilliore, redit et mihi otium pariter ac delectatio mirabilia scripturæ sanctæ totâ animâ solerti intentione scrutandi.—t. iv. 293.

* t. iv. p. 1. † t. v. p. 92.

employed; nor did he discontinue them till he was in the very act of death. At last, when he had attained a good old age, he was afflicted, about a fortnight before Easter, with a shortness of breath, unaccompanied with other pain, but sufficient to render his sleep short and broken, and to indicate approaching dissolution. Of this he was well aware, as were his pupils also; sometimes when they were reading to him they could not refrain from bursting into tears, and sometimes wept while they read. He himself often expressed a thankfulness for his sufferings, saying, that God chasteneth whom he loveth; and frequently he repeated the saying of St. Ambrose, .. "I have not so lived as that I should be ashamed to remain among you; but neither do I fear to die, for we have a merciful Lord." At this time he was employed upon two works; the one was a collection of extracts from St. Isidore, the other a translation of St. John's Gospel into the Anglo-Saxon tongue. With these works he went on notwithstanding his illness, and continued to give daily lessons as usual to his pupils. On the Tuesday before Ascension day his feet began to swell, his sickness became more distressing, and his breathing more difficult: but he was cheerful, and persisted in teaching or in dictating all that day,

saying sometimes, be diligent, for I know not how long I may last. The following night he had no sleep, but past it wholly in prayer and thanksgiving. Very early in the morning he called his young men to their tasks, that they might complete the version upon which he was engaged. They were employed with him thus till nine o'clock, and then left him, as the office of the day required, to go in procession with the relics: one of them, however, remained, because a chapter of the translation was not finished, and though the youth observed that it must be painful for him to dictate, Bede bade him take his pen and write. About three in the afternoon he called Wilberth, (the disciple by whom the details of his illness and death were recorded,) and told him to fetch a little box, in which he kept a few precious things, such as pepper, incense, and *oraries, that he might

* *Oraria.* The meaning of the word in this place is doubtful. In its common acceptation it simply means a handkerchief to wipe the face—a cleanly synonyme for *sudarium.* In its ecclesiastical sense it is derived *ab orando,* and signifies a scarf or tippet, worn by deacons on the left shoulder, and on both by priests and the higher clergy. (Bingham, B. 13. c. 8, § 2.) But it is evident that neither of these things can be intended here, for they would not have been kept among things of value in a casket. . *quædam pretiosa in capsellâ.* Cressy says, "some interpret it handkerchiefs, others stoles; and some likewise chaplets, for numbering of prayers, which, say they, therefore

distribute them among the priests of the monastery; then, giving away these poor memorials, he besought them not to forget him in their prayers, and to perform masses for him when he should be departed, for this would probably be the last time they would see him in this world. "It is now time," said he, "that I should be released, and go to Him who created me. I have lived long, and my merciful Judge hath ordered my ways well. The hour of my freedom is at hand, and my soul desires to behold Christ in his glory." When this parting was over, the young disciple said to him, Master, there is yet one sentence more. Write quickly then, he replied. Presently Wilberth said, Now it is done! You have said truly, rejoined the dying man; it is finished! Take my head between thy hands, and place me so that I may look towards my oratory, and there call upon my Father." Being then laid on the pavement, in

from him took the name of Beads." (582.) And in another place he says, "I do not know by what warrant from ancient monuments the devout writer, by some stated the chancellor of the blessed Virgin, B. Alanus de Rupe, affirms, that St. Bede was the first who began in England the exercise of particular devotions and reciting of chaplets to the honour of that glorious queen of Virgins; for so we find the *Oraria*, distributed by St. Bede to his brethren, translated; and that from Brittany such devotion was propagated into France and other foreign countries."—p. 583.

the position which he directed, he expired presently, chaunting the doxology with his latest breath.

A life of Bede, larded as usual with miracles, was prepared by pious fraud for popular credulity; but it appears to have been of foreign* growth; and the only fables concerning him which seem to have obtained currency in his own country, are two stories to account for the epithet which time and custom have affixed to his name. One is the well known and silly tale that an invisible Being made use of the word to botch a leonine verse which some sorry poet, intending it for his epitaph, had left unfinished in despair. The other is less trite, and in a more unusual style of invention. It represents him as having lost his sight in his old age. A boy whom he employed to lead him when he went abroad to preach in the open air, stopt one day in mockery near a heap of stones, where there was no person present, and told the blind man he might begin to hold forth, for there were plenty there to hear him.† The holy

* The Bollandists obtained a manuscript of it from Bödeken, a convent of Regular Canons in the diocese of Paderborn. (Mar. t. vi. 719). But it was one of the gnats at which they strained, and therefore was not printed in their invaluable collection.

† Yepes. *Coronica General de la Orden de S. Benito.* 3. ff. 55.

father began accordingly, and when he had concluded his discourse, the stones, in proof that his pious intention had been accepted, spake and said, Amen, thou hast preached well O venerable Bede!*

The little stone cell in which, apart from the monastery† and from all interruption, he used to read, write, dictate, or meditate, was shown some centuries after his death as a spot which his presence had hallowed. He was buried at Jarrow, and it is not known at what time the pious resurrection-men removed his remains to Durham, nor whether with permission of the convent, or furtively. But about three hundred years after his death, a certain priest, Elfrid by name, who said he was instructed in a vision to go about the churches and monasteries in Northumberland discovering relics, imparted to

* "Others, disclaiming this conceit," says Fuller, (p. 99) "assign this reason: because Bede's homilies were read in all churches in his life time, *plain* Bede was conceived too little, and *Saint* Bede too much, because, according to Popish (but not St. Paul's) principles, Saint is too much flattery to be given to any whilst alive; Solon allowing none *happy*, and thus mine author none in this degree *holy*, before their death. Whereupon *Venerable* was found out as an expedient to accommodate the difference, luckily hitting the mark, as a title neither too high, nor too low; just even to so good a man and great a scholar whilst alive."

† Acta SS. Maii. t. vi. 721.

one of his friends in confidence that he had deposited the bones of Bede in the same coffin with those of St. Cuthbert, charging him to keep the spot where they were deposited religiously secret, lest this treasure should be purloined by strangers, who were always sufficiently ready to carry off such spoils, and to whom the relics of the Venerable Bede would be particularly tempting.* They were separated afterwards, and placed in a shrine; but in Queen Elizabeth's reign Whitingham, Dean of Durham, (a man who brought with him puritanical opinions from Frankfort,) removed† them it is not known whither, in order that they might no longer be visited by the Papists. The stone, however, which once covered his remains, is still shown in that cathedral, and will not be regarded without some thoughtful and respectful feelings by those who are free from all taint of Romish superstition. The place of his abode can no longer inspire that sentiment. Jarrow,

* Acta SS. Maii. t. vi. 723.

† A grave was shown in the Vatican Church as containing his remains; but undoubtedly this was some other Bede. (Acta SS. Maii. vi. 723.) A body was also shown as his in the Monastery of St. Benigno, at Genoa; but this Bede was a Saint who flourished a century later at the court of Charlemagne. (Yepes. 3. ff. 56.)

where he, who was, in his days, the most learned of living men, past his long life in devotion, or in tuition, or in study, is now inhabited by pitmen and colliers, and the ruins of the monastery are almost choked with ashes and coal-dust. There, however, Bede's chair is at this day exhibited, . . *preserved* I must not say, for it is every where carved with the initials of mischievous visitors, and moreover miserably disfigured by the more accountable, but not less destructive practice of carrying away pieces as memorials or as relics. Nothing but the Saxon massiveness of its construction has enabled it to outlast these disgraceful mutilations.

LETTER IV.

CAUSES WHICH PROMOTED THE SUCCESS OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

"THE holy English Church," says Baronius, "hath always gloried in having produced so great a teacher as the Venerable Bede. But her apostate sons have rejected him, and go after false apostles in his stead, who, erring themselves, and leading others into error, follow after Satan. Wherefore, when such an accuser stands up against them before the judgement-seat of great God, they shall receive sentence of damnation."* A most Roman Catholic opinion, and more Cardinal than Christian-like! "Our dear

* "*Tanto Doctore jure semper gloriata est sancta Ecclesia Anglicana: quem cum rejiciant filii desertores, qui, loco ipsius pseudo-apostolos errantes, et in errorem mittentes, abeuntes retro post Satanam, sunt secuti; in futuro sæculo ante judicium magni Dei, tanto instante accusatore, sententiam damnationis accipient.*" (Quoted in the Life of Bede prefixed to his Works. Col. Agrippinæ, 1612.)

countrymen," says Cressy,* "will do wisely to attend to the affrighting admonition of the learned Cardinal." If this good man's judgement had been commensurate with his industry, he might have found enough during his diligent perusal of Bede to make him hesitate in subscribing to this sweeping† condemnation, and to have made him doubt whether he could indeed appeal to the Venerable's authority in his own justification for having forsaken the Church of England to enter the Benedictine order. Corrupt enough the Romish Church was in Bede's age, heaven knows! but it was very far from having reached the height of its corruptions. But credulity was the characteristic weakness of Father Cressy's mind. He believed all the legends with which Bede's history is filled as implicitly as Bede himself had believed them; perhaps more so: for Bede thought it his duty‡ as an historian to relate

* Page 583.

† It is, however, worthy of notice, that he qualifies it in his translation of this passage, and instead of pronouncing sentence of damnation upon the English people, which Baronius does in a tone of infallibility, as if he were Pope instead of Cardinal, Cressy slips in, that "*they have reason to apprehend it.*"

‡ In his epistle to King Ceolulph, after stating from what sources his information was derived, he concludes thus: *Lec-*

what he found written or had heard; and while he repeats fables which to us are gross and palpable, the manner of his relation is such as completely to approve his own perfect veracity. And this leads me to the subject of monkish miracles.

You complain, Sir, that I treat the miracles of your Church with contempt and ridicule: it would be well if they called forth no other feeling in a sincere and ingenuous mind! You tell me that a Roman Catholic may disbelieve them all* without ceasing to be a Roman Catholic: and you ask "if† it be either just or generous to harass the present Catholics with the weaknesses of the ancient writers of their communion, and to attempt to render their religion and themselves‡ odious by these unceasing and offensive repetitions?" Is it quite consistent, Sir, thus to cry mercy upon this part of your case, and yet to rely at one time upon the very fables which you abandon at another? For

toremque suppliciter obsecro, ut si qua in his quæ scripsimus, aliter quàm severitas habet, posita repererit, non hoc nobis imputet, qui (quæ vera lex historiæ est) simpliciter ea quæ famâ vulgante collegimus, ad instructionem posteritatis literis mandare studuimus.

* Page 46. † Page 48.

‡ Rather than interrupt the text, I chuse here to protest against Mr. Butler's repeated and injurious insinuation.

you boast of a perpetual succession of miracles in the Romish Church, as a perpetual proof that it is the true one. You give them up in the detail, and appeal to them in the gross. This is something like your proposed rule of controversy, and your Maynooth rule of faith, in which we are told that you are not required to believe in the Saints whose names are in your kalendar, whose churches and whose altars you attend, whose relics and whose images you venerate, whose festivals you keep, and whose legends* make a part of your liturgy. Methinks, Sir, this manner of playing fast and loose with opinions, of advancing at one time what you have renounced at another, as may happen to suit the bearing of your immediate argument, savours rather of law than of logic; it belongs to the practices of perverted subtlety, not to the use of right reason. The subterfuges of disputation are always unworthy; they are especially misplaced when we are looking for the realities of historical and religious truth.

This, Sir, is your position:† "that if Roman Catholics prove a constant succession of *mira-*

*. Truly, indeed, did Bishop Jewel say, *ea legunt in templis suis, quæ ne ipsi quidem dubitant esse mera mendacia et inanes fabulas.*, Apologia, p. 123. ed. 1591.

† Page 40.

cles in their church, they consequently establish the truth of her doctrine." Now I advance as a position, not less certain, that if Protestants prove a constant succession of *frauds* in that church, the Papal system is what I have pronounced it to be: a prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness. You have said that the words Superstition and Idolatry are the burthen of the Book of the Church:* if they are not the burthen of the present volume, it is because one that will be even less palatable, must more frequently be used. Superstition and idolatry call as much for pity as for condemnation, but there is nothing to qualify our detestation of imposture; and if I do not substantiate that charge upon the Romish Church, let me be held for a calumniator by posterity!

The Book of the Church contains facts enough to substantiate it, in the series of frauds which are there noticed, as natural and no unimportant parts of the narrative, from the bodily flagellation of Laurentius in a vision, down to Father Garnet's miraculous miniatures on straw. But you are pleased to call for authorities, and in a manner too as if it had been my plan to withhold them because none

* Page 338.

could be produced in support of what I had advanced. Here, Sir, I am compelled to trouble you with some little repetition both of your own words and of mine, from which the argument cannot in this place be disentangled. "The following passage,"* you say, "will be read by Roman Catholics with surprise and concern. A vision is related, said to have been seen by Laurentius, one of the missionaries. This, it is asserted in the Book of the Church, must be either miracle, or fraud, or fable; many such there are in the history of the Anglo-Saxon as of every Romish Church; and it must be remembered, that when such stories are mere fables, they have for the most part been feigned with the intent of serving the interests of the Romish Church, and promulgated not as fiction, but as falsehood, with a fraudulent mind. The legend which is here related, is probably a wonder of the second class. The clergy of that age thought it allowable to practise upon the ignorance and credulity of a barbarous people, if by such means they might forward the work of their conversion, or induce them, when converted, to lead a more religious life. (There is a sentence omitted here, which I shall

* Page 30.

notice presently.) Whether they thought thus or not, it is certain that thus they acted, and it is not less certain that a system which admitted of pious fraud opened a way for the most impious abuses." In the next chapter it is said, "the missionaries were little scrupulous concerning the measures which they employed, because they were persuaded that any measures were justifiable if they conduced to bring about the good end which was their aim."

Here (I am proceeding now with your comment upon these passages) here we particularly lament your avowed plan of withholding from your readers your authorities for your assertions. To support this charge against the Anglo-Saxon clergy, it was incumbent upon you to bring authentic evidence to prove their having published or practised fictions in the manner you have described: to produce instances of it so numerous as must justly fix the guilt on the general body of the Anglo-Saxon clergy; and to show that they acted on these occasions, not in consequence of the general weakness or pravity of human nature, but under the impulse or sanction of their Church, or her doctrines. Nothing of this kind have you brought forward; all, therefore, that you say,

is mere accusation." And again* "You must admit that the principle which you impute to the Anglo-Saxon missionaries, is most nefarious, and fraught with the worst consequences. You must also admit that a charge of this nature, when it is brought against an individual, can only be proved by producing either his own acknowledgement of it, or else such facts as establish it by just inference; and that when it is brought against a body of men, it can only be proved by producing a multiplicity of such acknowledgements, or a multiplicity of such facts. But in the present case, where are those acknowledgements? Where are those facts?"

"Where are those facts!" Sir, if you ask for them as relating specifically to the British and Anglo-Saxon Churches, I refer you to Bede and Capgrave *passim*; or to your own authority, Father Michael Alford; or to that industrious and faithful compiler, Father Serenus Cressy, whose "Church History of Brittany" I recommend all persons who may have read Dr. Lingard's Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, to examine as supplementary to that work, because it contains the whole series of pious frauds and falsehoods which the able modern historian has

* Page 52.

found it convenient to discard. If you require such facts as relate, not to the Anglo-Saxon alone, but to the general, or, in Romish language, the Universal Roman Catholic Church; then, Sir, I refer you to your own Breviaries; to the one-and-fifty folios of the Bollandists; to all collections of that kind, that of your kinsman included, (for, prepared as it has been for the English scale of credulity, by weeding, it still contains a choice assortment of the facts desired;) to every biography of a Romish Saint, or candidate for Saintship; and to all the chronicles of all the Monastic Orders in all their varieties and subdivisions. These references are not given at a venture, after the manner of an advocate, who recks not whether what he affirms as a fact, or appeals to as an authority, be true or false, careless of after detection, so his immediate purpose may be answered by the profligate and audacious artifice. I am conversant with the books to which I appeal. A collection from them of such miracles as bear directly upon the charge that a system of falsehood and imposture has been regularly carried on by the Romish clergy, (more especially the Regulars,) and sanctioned by the Popes, would fill more volumes than Dr. Rees's Cyclopædia; and, without intending any disparagement

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to your production, such a collection might, with much greater propriety, be entitled the Book of the Roman Catholic Church. You call for proofs and authorities, Sir, and you shall have them. Midas was not more fully satisfied in his desire for gold, than you shall be with both.

The assertion which you have so complacently pronounced to be mere accusation, stands in the Book of the Church warranted and approved by the fact with which it is there introduced. You have past over that story with noticeable dexterity, calling it a "vision related to have been seen by Laurentius," and saying nothing more of it. To use your own mode of interrogation, "is it equitable, is it candid, is it consistent with fair controversy," to treat a charge of fraudulent practices as a direct and groundless calumny, and thus, to slur over the particular instance which gave occasion for introducing the general remark? Look at the story, Sir, and say whether it be not either miracle, or fraud, or falsehood. I set it before you now, not as I had there compressed it in few words, but that you may have no pretext to complain either of subtraction or addition, in close translation from Bede ... the well-head, as you well know, for all this portion of our history. It is necessary to premise that Mellitus and

Justus having withdrawn from the kingdom of Essex to France, because of the infidelity of the three joint kings, Laurentius had declared his intention of following them from Kent for a like reason.

But when Laurentius was about to follow Mellitus and Justus and to depart from Britain, he gave orders that a bed should be prepared for him that night in the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, (of which we have frequently spoken,) in the which when, after pouring forth many prayers and tears to God for the state of the Church, he had lain down to rest and was asleep, the most blessed Prince of the Apostles appeared to him, and, inflicting upon him many severe stripes in the dead of the night, demanded of him with apostolic severity, wherefore he was about to forsake the flock which he himself had committed to his charge, or to what pastor, when he was thus flying, he meant to consign Christ's sheep, who were placed in the midst of wolves? "Art thou," said he, "forgetful of my example, who for the little ones of Christ, which he in the choice of his love commended to me, endured chains, stripes, prisons, affliction, death itself at last, even the death of the cross, from the unbelievers and enemies of Christ, myself, therefore, to be

crowned with Christ? The servant of Christ, Laurentius, being excited both by the stripes and exhortations of the blessed Peter, went as soon as it was morning to the King, and throwing off his garments, showed him how he was lacerated with stripes. The King was greatly astonished thereat, and inquired who had dared inflict such strokes upon a personage of his station. But when he heard that it was for the sake of his salvation that the Bishop had suffered this torment and these lashes, from the Apostle of Christ; he was greatly affrighted, and, forbidding all idolatrous worship, and breaking off his unlawful marriage, received the Christian faith, and was baptized, and sought to promote and favour the Church in all things as much as he could."*

Now, Sir, this is not a floating fable cast up by the stream of tradition. The Venerable Bede is strictly a veracious writer, and he tells us that the materials for that portion of his history which relates to the South of England were transmitted to him from the best authority and in the most authentic manner. He received them from Abbot Albin, who was bred at Canterbury under Archbishop Theodore

* L. 2. c. 6.

and Abbot Hadrian, persons whom Bede calls venerable and most erudite men. Albin had collected all that could be learnt concerning Augustine and his successors, either from written documents or the relation of old people, within whose fathers' memory the event in question had occurred. The story came directly from the scene of action: whether fiction or fact, it is a Canterbury tale, and given us on the authority of Laurentius's successors. I believe the story, though not the miracle; it has every mark of being a fact; it is a part of the history, not an episodical incident which might be inserted or omitted at the pleasure of the writer. You did wisely, Sir, to keep the notable circumstances of this pretended vision out of sight; for I appeal to every one who has not delivered his common sense as well as his conscience into a Father Confessor's keeping, whether they do not bear the stamp of fraud as plain and legible as the King's broad R.? We have the Acts of the Apostles, and there we see what the miracles were which they wrought, or which were wrought for them; how public in their circumstances, and how unequivocal: and there we do not see that they were either addicted to flogging themselves, as so many Saints of the Romish Church have been, or to

flogging others, as the wonder-makers of that Church have thought proper to represent them. It would require something more than Jerome's asseveration, Saint and Father though he is, to make me believe that he was taken bodily in a vision before the throne of our Redeemer and Judge, and there by that Redeemer's order scourged for reading Cicero. That he may have dreamt so is not improbable; but when I find St. Jerome asserting that he awoke with the marks as well as the smart of the stripes, I must believe either that a miracle was wrought for an unworthy and even an ill purpose, or on that the Saints and Fathers of the Romish Church dealt in what they supposed to be pious frauds more than two centuries before the Anglo-Saxon Missionaries arrived in England. It was the system of the Romish Church, and in that system the Missionaries were trained.

The titular Bishop Milner may perhaps bravely profess his belief in these precious miracles; for one who has taken under his protection not only St. Winifred, but St. Ursula, and the whole company of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, may be valiant enough to defend anything. But you, Sir, and those persons whom I must be allowed to call the semi-reformed English Romanists, of whom you may be con-

sidered as the representative, ... you are ready to exclaim that you believe them as little as I do; that all such stories are only the weaknesses of your ancient writers, the natural growth of unenlightened and credulous times. I cannot allow you to escape so easily. Base the money is, but it is the currency of the Romish Church; the perpetual succession of your boasted miracles is made up of such stories; they are not the weaknesses of your writers, they are the frauds of your teachers and your Saints. It was the system of that Church to encourage, to accredit, and to practise them. It is so still. Witness the pictures of the Virgin Mary at Rome that moved their eyes and squinted! witness the canonization of Joseph Labré! witness the Episcopal Knight of St. Winifred's Well! witness Prince Hohenloe! witness the blood of St. Januarius! Would the Neapolitan priests exhibit this experiment in the presence of Sir Humphry Davy, and permit him to examine the phial and its contents? Sir, you are conscious that they dare not submit their miracle to any such investigation. You know also that this juggle* is annu-

* A trick of the same kind, which was practised at Hales, in Gloucestershire, was detected, and exposed at the Reforma-

ally performed with the full knowledge of your highest ecclesiastical authorities, not with their sufferance only, but their sanction, with the full approbation of your Infallible Church and its Infallible Head; and knowing this, is it "with a sigh, or a smile," Sir, that you charge me with calumny when I charge that Church with carrying on a system of imposture and wickedness?

I made the charge advisedly, and upon the fullest evidence. But I am neither so uncharitable nor so unwise as to suppose that the system was begun in that spirit of nefandous impiety with which it was afterwards carried on by the Monastic Orders, and more especially by the two great Mendicant families. The artifices which your Church has practised in this way are of two kinds; those which, with regard to their intention, may properly be called pious frauds, and those for which the motives have been as bad as the means. For the latter, (and it is the larger class,) no language of reprobation can be too strong; for the former, surely, Sir, you must have seen how willingly I ad-

tion. It was performed by turning the phial, which, thick and opaque on one side, transparent on the other, was moved by an unseen hand.—(*Burnet's Reformation*, i. 243. ed. 1681.) The exhibition at Naples is evidently chemical.

mitted every thing that can be offered in excuse. I have before noticed that a sentence has been omitted by you in that passage from the Book of the Church relating to this subject, which you have extracted for the purpose of impugning it and representing it as mere accusation unsupported by any proofs. I do not, Sir, entertain the slightest suspicion that you designedly garbled the passage: you either thought the sentence might be dropt without injury to the context, or, which is more probable, overlooked it in transcribing. The omission, however, is of some importance, because I have there distinctly stated what I believe to be the principle upon which the Anglo-Saxon missionaries proceeded. "They may have believed themselves," I there said,* "to be acting like parents who deceive children for their good, when it would be in vain to reason with them." Most injurious to religion as this policy in its consequences proved, it may fairly be admitted that by some such reasoning these missionaries justified themselves to their own hearts. Their object was unequivocally good; and when for the promotion of that object they availed themselves of artifices which might secure their

* Vol. i. p. 38.

ascendancy over a barbarous people, they are not more to be condemned, if we look to policy alone, than Columbus for imposing upon the Indians by predicting an eclipse. Some excuse may even be found for their successors, who had neither the same motives nor the same virtues to redeem them. When the good things of this world were divided between violence* and cunning, we must not too rigorously con-

* "Some men's bodies overgrow their souls, and these are easily impelled to act any boisterous mischief. Others, being impotent of body, strive so much the more to furnish their minds with subtle inventions or commodious experience; and by making too much use of the common proverb, *he that is weak had need to be wily*, are easily tempted to practise unlawful policy with delight, as the only preservative against contempt, or as an instrument of revenge upon such as they hate or fear. And it would go much against the course of common experience, if that wiliness which hath weakness for its foundation, should not be often enforced to cover or shelter itself with craft and fraud."—Thomas Jackson, vol. ii. p. 63.

Among all our old Divines, ... those who were giants in the earth, ... there is not one whose works will more richly repay an attentive perusal than this excellent author.

I may continue the quotation ... "To love our own wills is an impoteney natural unto all. And we love them the better, at least more strongly, when we perceive them set on that which in itself is good. Whence it is that our desires of doing many things which are good and commendable, often draw us to use means not so commendable for their accomplishment."

demn those who of two bad courses chose the best, or at least that which produced the least immediate evil.

The evidence that they acted upon this system is so authentic, and the instances of it so numerous, that when you call upon me for *facts* and *authorities*, I must have supposed you were unacquainted with any earlier history of the Anglo-Saxon Church than Dr. Lingard's, if you had not referred to Father Alford's Annals, in which facts enough of this kind are collected: and as you have examined that work, I can only conclude that either you must have forgotten what you read there, or that you past over whatever might have raised inconvenient and uncomfortable suspicions in the perusal. You, however, well know that Bede is the chief authority: indeed you have observed, in connection with some words wherein I had expressed my unfeigned veneration for his character, that "* on the relations of the Venerable Bede does the truth of a great portion of the Anglo-Saxon miracles depend." Upon the nature and value of Bede's testimony I have some observations to offer. There is a point of view in which I am not aware that it has hitherto been considered; and

* Page 70.

as that point appears to me of no trifling importance, (were it only as it respects the character of that most venerable person,) I thank you, Sir, for having directed my attention to the subject.

Bede's name is in our Kalendar, and I hope it may remain there when St. Dunstan's, and one or two others which disgrace it, shall be expunged. He has the title of Saint in your's; and it is laid down as a maxim by one of the most learned men* that ever prostrated his intellect to the Romish superstition, (and in other respects also one of the most judicious and

* The Spanish Antiquary and Historian Ambrosio de Morales. These are his words: *De qualquier Santo de quien otro Santo sabemos que escribió su historia, luego nos damos por sutisfecho, y con reverencia tenemos por muy verdadera y de grande autoridad todo lo que alli se cuenta.* t. iv. p. 291. ed. 1791. In like manner Smet, joint editor with Ghesquiere of the *Acta Sanctorum Belgii*, when he apprehends that the reader may entertain some doubts concerning certain miracles which he relates of St. Eligius's *hammer*, exhorts him to remember that others concerning his *bed* were recorded by St. Audoen, who worked miracles himself, and was therefore a competent witness. *Si quis miretur, etiam malleolis honorem aliquem impendi, meminerit eorum quæ Audoënus de lecto aliisque ad Eligium spectantibus posteritati tradidit, et quibus prodigiis illustrata fuerint, recolat: ac ne Audoëni apud eum vacillet auctoritas, observet,* hunc biographum, qui ipse miraculorum dono clareret, de miraculis testem maxime idoneum habendum. t. iii. p. 330.

acute,) that whatever one Saint relates of another, when he writes his life, is reverently to be believed. Unwilling as you might be to subscribe to this as a general rule, I am persuaded that in the case of Bede you will hesitate as little as I do to admit it. It is well known that he relates no miracles of his own performing; and this you may account for satisfactorily by his modesty, and because he has not written any detailed account of his own life. But how will you explain the singular fact, that though his Ecclesiastical History, and the biographies which he drew up from materials which were supplied to him, are full of miraculous stories, the Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth under whom and with whom he had lived, and which he composed therefore upon his own knowledge and responsibility, have no such garnish? How happens it, Sir, that when he gives you in so many instances, with a fidelity like that of Dampier, the authorities for his relations of this kind, he never presents one as having occurred directly within his own knowledge? He was a Saint himself, and conversant with Saints; and miracles were performed by every Saint of whom he speaks, except those whom he knew and lived with. They took place everywhere, except where he was present,

He heard of them from all sides far and near. He saw persons who had seen others who had seen them performed, or who knew the Saint by whom they were worked, or the patients upon whom they worked them; but he never witnessed one himself. It could not be for want of faith, for he believed the cases which were communicated to him, and faithfully recorded them. It could not be for want of opportunity; the United Monasteries contained a constellation of living Saints, and a choice assortment of relics, the authenticity of which could not be called in question: they had not been purchased as stolen goods, (common as it was so to deal in such articles,) but brought from Rome by Benedict Biscop himself, and were therefore undoubted originals;...moreover they were of the first water, of the finest touch,...relics of the Apostles as well as of the Martyrs. He tells us that they were there, and does not relate a single instance of their wonder-working virtue. And yet, believing feelingly and fervently in these things as he did, can it be doubted that he would have recorded such instances with eager delight, if there had been any which, as a wise and religious man, he could conscientiously have attested?

That Bede was aware of the importance of such attestations in these cases, is clearly shown in his writings. He contents himself with a general reference to his documents for the events which are merely historical, and gives it in his introductory Epistle to King Ceolulph, once for all: but when he introduces miracles, he is as particular in citing *authorities as you have required me to be, Sir.

* For example, a miracle (and a very possible one) was wrought upon a boy at the tomb of King Oswald, *quod ita esse gestum, qui referebat mihi frater inde adveniens adjecit, quod eo adhuc tempore quo mecum loquebatur, supercsset in eodem monasterio jam juvenis ille, in quo tunc puero factum erat hoc miraculum sanitatis.* (L. 3. c. 12.) Others he heard from Bishop Acca, who heard them from Willebord or Wilfred. (L. 3. c. 13, p. 62.) Another, *non quilibet dubius relator, sed fidissimus mihi nostræ Ecclesiæ presbyter, Cynimund vocabulo narravit, qui se hoc ab ipso Utta presbytero, in quo et per quem completum est, audisse perhibebat.* (L. 3. c. 15.) This, too, I shall have occasion to adduce as one of a numerous class, in which the *modus operandi* is perfectly understood. The brave stories of St. Fursey he relates upon the authority of an old brother in the Monastery, who had heard them from a very veracious and pious man, who had heard them from Fursey himself. (L. 3. 20.) This is exactly in the manner of Dampier, one of the most faithful as well as exact and excellent of all voyage-writers. And where Bede cannot thus directly refer to his testimonies, he gives such stories as *quæ a majoribus audivimus*, or with an *ut ferunt*. I have here given a few instances only of what is his constant practice.

This is a remarkable circumstance, and I know not of any other instance in which such precaution has been of so much consequence to the author's own reputation. By so doing he has given the most decisive proof of his own trust-worthiness: The only imputation which could have stained his otherwise spotless character, was that of having knowingly concurred in the system of deceit which the Romish Church was carrying on; and from that imputation he is thus completely cleared. He was credulous in an age of credulity, and therefore he believed and related the miracles of which he heard. But he was too intelligent to be deceived into a belief that he saw any himself, and too upright to increase the currency of fables by circulating any from the mint of his own invention. Conversant as I was with Bede's historical and biographical works, this observation (and I am persuaded, Sir, that you will feel its importance) had not struck me till I recurred to them on the present occasion. I have real pleasure, for the deep and unfeigned respect with which I regard his venerable name, in bringing forth this part of his character, the only one of his many great and admirable virtues which, during eleven centuries, has (if I am not mistaken) never before been distinctly

perceived; and I once more thank you, Sir, sincerely, for having drawn me into a course of inquiry which has produced so gratifying a result.

Bede's evidence, therefore, as to the existence of miracles in his time, may be compared to what your own would be concerning those of the present age, if in a Supplement to your Historical Memoirs, or in a second part of your Reminiscences, you were to write upon the boasted perpetual succession of supernatural occurrences, as still characterizing the Papal Church, and thereby demonstrating it to be the true one. You might refer to many prodigious instances, abroad and at home, and relate some of them for edification; and such testimony would have all the weight of your name and character, till some thoughtful person should examine to what that testimony amounted. It might be recorded in your pages that many of your friends (persons of undoubted integrity) had witnessed the liquefaction at Naples, with great devotion; and that nothing could be more certain and notorious than that this miracle was still performed annually, as it had been from time immemorial, in public, before the Court and people of that populous and enlightened city. You might appeal also to the recent

invention of Nossa Senhora do Buraco, near Lisbon, the image which was discovered by a country boy following his dog, which had followed a rabbit into a hole in a hill. The boy groped his way into a cavern or excavation, and there he found both rabbit and dog on their knees before the miraculous presence. The image disappeared and was re-discovered in a tree, about which the cattle first moved round and round, as in a dance of jubilee, and then knelt in adoration. Odours were emitted from the image, cures performed by it, offerings made to it; crowds assembled at the cave, a Friar preached every day there upon the miracles which it had already wrought; a book describing them was published by authority; the Queen went thither in state, and presented a silver lamp; and finally Our Lady was removed to Lisbon in solemn procession, by water, and received upon the quay by a train of clergy and friars, a guard of honour, and an innumerable multitude of believing spectators, to be placed upon an altar in one of the churches,* there "to be honoured, venerated, and adored, with due honour and worship;" and one day to form the subject of a supple-

* See Mrs. Baillie's Lisbon in the Years 1821-2-3, vol. ii. pp. 112. 128. 132.

mentary chapter to the Santuario Mariano, if that truly curious and edifying work should ever be reprinted. You might relate these, Sir, as historical and indubitable facts, and procure depositions to them upon oath, if you thought proper to present them in the most authentic and imposing form. But unless you could use some cogent arguments to show that the liquefaction of St. Januarius's blood at Naples is not a juggle, and that the invention of the new Nossa Senhora at Lisbon was not a concerted scheme to assist in bringing about the downfall of a party, not more scrupulous themselves in the means which they employed, these miracles would derive no additional credibility from your authority.

You might also assure your readers, that though you were not so fortunate as to be at Rome in the years 1796-7, when the Virgin moved her eyes in her pictures, and looked compassionately and benignly upon the crowds who were adoring her, you had perused the "Official Memoirs of the Juridical Examination" into those miraculous events, and the decree of approbation, and the account of similar prodigies which occurred about the same time at Ancona and other places in Italy, all translated and published together in this coun-

try, with six and twenty plates, by Messrs. Keating, Brown, and Co. You could not upon your own knowledge depose to the wonderful cure of Winifred White, at her namesake's St. Winifred's Well: but your learned friend the vicar-apostolic and titular bishop Dr. Milner, had inquired into the miracle upon the spot, seen and examined the patient, collected depositions concerning her character and her case, and laid them in the most authentic form, with his own signature and the sign of the cross, before the public. You might speak of Dr. Milner's abilities and erudition in fitting terms, as having been acknowledged by the numerous persons of his own Church as well as ours with whom he has engaged in controversy; you might praise him for the religious Roman Catholic spirit, the burning zeal which he manifests in all his writings; and it would not be necessary for you to dwell upon the fidelity of his references, nor to notice the urbanity of his manner, the meekness of his temper, and the enlarged and enlightened liberality of his sentiments. Then, Sir, much as you might regret that you had not yourself been so happy as to witness any of the miracles effected by Prince Hohenloe's intercession, you might assure posterity that they were matters of public notoriety in your days;

that accounts of them frequently appeared in the newspapers; that books had been published concerning them; that cases had occurred at Dublin; and that a mass having been celebrated at Celbridge in Ireland, in unison with the thaumaturgic Prince's prayers, which were to be offered at the same time for the benefit of those who should desire to take advantage of them, many * were said to have been cured; and it was confidently affirmed that one person, a Munster man, Flanagan by name, who had been quite blind for many years, had recovered his sight instantaneously, at the elevation of the host.

I put this hypothetically: not to impeach your understanding by representing that you believe in all or any of these things; still less to insinuate that you would lend your authority to accredit them if you believed them not. But if you were persuaded of their truth, thus it is that you might in perfect good faith record them, and yet prove nothing more than that such mi-

* See an account of this gross deception in the Observations on J. K. L.'s Vindication of the Religious and Civil Principles of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, 1824, a very able pamphlet, and well worthy of attention at this time. Two Protestant clergymen very properly took the trouble of inquiring into this juggle and exposing it.

racles were said to have been enacted in your days, and that you honestly supposed them to be miraculous. Now this is all (in one point of view) that can be inferred from Bede's testimony; unless it should be suspected that he himself entertained some doubts concerning the truth of such stories from the singularly careful manner in which he always adduces some authority for them, never in one instance resting a statement of this nature on his own. I notice this possible suspicion only for the purpose of declaring my full persuasion that there is no ground for it. Sorry should I be if there were; for the integrity of his character would then be tainted, and we should lose one of those objects of unmingled admiration which it is wholesome both for the understanding and the heart to contemplate. It is to me perfectly apparent from his writings that he lived in a state of happy, unhesitating belief, being in this respect altogether in sympathy with his contemporaries, far as he was advanced beyond them in other things. It will require a separate disquisition to show in what manner the general credulity which then prevailed arose, and by what natural causes and accidental circumstances it was fostered, and how it was abused. Such an inquiry is important in itself and pertinent to our imme-

diate subject. But as it is pleasanter to take short stages than long ones, and to see the distance measured by miles rather than leagues,

Qui farò fine,—per tornar di novo
A donarvi piacer col canto novo.

ON THE MIRACLES OF THE PAPAL CHURCH.

You maintain, Sir, that we are taught to expect an uninterrupted succession of miracles in the Church. To prove this you quote the prophecy of Joel,* "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions;" and you ground your application of this text upon the declaration of St. Peter to the Jews, when, after citing these words, he said,† "the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." You add then the promise of our ‡ Saviour to his disciples: and because no limitation of time is expressed in his words, you conclude that they are unlimited; and therefore miracles must somewhere have been uninterruptedly wrought. Even in law, Sir, you would find it difficult to establish as a maxim, that words *must* mean any thing they

* Joel ii. 28. † Acts ii. 39.

‡ John xiv. 12, 13. Mark xvi. 17, 18.

may mean: still less will any such consequence hold good in logic and in theology. With regard to the former texts it may suffice to say that those prophecies had their primary accomplishment when the Mosaic dispensation was brought to its close, and that their secondary and final fulfilment is yet to come.

Were I treating this subject merely as matter for disputation, I might assert that the miracles of the Papal Church are indeed foretold in Scripture by the Apostle* when he forewarned us of "that wicked One whose coming should be after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and false wonders;" and by our Lord and Saviour,† when he said to his disciples that there should arise "false Christs and false prophets who should show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect." If it were necessary to admit that the succession of the Romish miracles is proved, then upon bringing "to the Law and to the Testimony" the doctrines and practices which they must have been performed to confirm and approve,‡ this would

* Thess. ii. 2. 8, 9. † Matt. xxiv. 24. Mark xiii. 22.

‡ "We shall find them," says Middleton, "always the most numerous, and the most confidently attested, in proportion to the absurdity of the doctrine, or practice in whose favour they

be the true and sufficient explanation. This, however, is not a knot which cannot be unloosed without the Devil's interposition. There was no occasion why he should work real prodigies to extend a system of delusion, when false ones were represented every where with complete success, to the same end, even when not with the same direct intent.

If it be impossible to determine at what time those miracles ceased which were necessary for the first propagation of Christianity, it is certain that whenever they ceased, there were many persons who continued to expect them, and that there must have been others who pretended to possess a power which might so easily be rendered gainful. At the very beginning there were false brethren. We see in

are alleged: as in the case of Transubstantiation, Purgatory, the Worship of Images, Relics, Crucifixes, Indulgences, and all the tricks of monkery; as if miracles were of no other use but to subvert the reason and senses of mankind, and confound all the distinctions between right and wrong. But if there be any rule of judging of their reality, or any power in man to discern truth from falsehood, we must necessarily conclude from *the nature and end of the Popish miracles*, that whatever testimonies may be brought to support them, they were all, without exception, either *wrought by wicked spirits, or forged by wicked men.*"—Prefatory Discourse to the Letter from Rome. Misc. Works, vol. v. p. 74. edit. 1755.

our own days continual examples that, however obscure and despised a sect may be, there are always people who find their interest in joining it. Such worldly motives were as little wanting then as now; nor was there any danger in this: for the professors who made a trade of their religion in safe seasons, could always in time of persecution secure themselves by renouncing it. Some of these unworthy men may have been in a state of half-belief, like Simon when he would have purchased the Apostolic power: and sometimes it must have happened that they became the dupes of their own success. The knave as well as the enthusiast is liable to this consequence; and this is one process whereby that compound of roguery and fanaticism is produced, of which so many instances may be called to mind.

It is not necessary to suppose any unusual proportion either of craft or credulity in the first centuries for understanding wherefore a very general delusion concerning this matter should have prevailed: men were prepared for it by all existing systems and opinions. The very fables which were held for facts in natural history were so marvellous that nothing could appear incredible to those who received them; and they were received even by the learned and the wise.

Without entering into the question whether the illusions of heathen superstition may be explained wholly by human artifice, or must sometimes be ascribed to the agency of evil spirits, it is certain that the heathens believed miracles were performed by their Deities; the Primitive Christians admitted that such wonders were wrought, but imputed them to the Devil; and thus the converts brought with them a habit of credulity, which was changed only in its direction. They expected no more from the Martyrs than they used to expect from the Demigods; and it would have been strange indeed if they should have rejected as incredible such tales of their living teachers as they found recorded by the gravest and best historians of the Emperor Vespasian.

It has sometimes been said concerning the Romish miracles, that of such relations some are miraculous but not true, and the others true but not miraculous. This however ought to be observed, that in the latter division there are many which must have seemed miraculous to all the parties concerned. And here it may suffice, without noticing other natural phenomena, to instance only those effects, whether sanative or injurious, which the mind when deeply excited is capable of producing upon

the body. I do not doubt that in this manner bodily diseases have frequently been cured, and more frequently for a time suspended. And this has taken place not in the Romish Church alone, but in all other religious communities where such curative means have been practised, Mahommedan and Heathen as well as Christian, the effects which seem and are believed to be prodigious being merely natural. Whether such effects are produced by faith in a saint or in a quack, by relics or tractors, by exorcism or animal magnetism, the same principle in human nature is appealed to, the same unconscious power is put in action. I have no more difficulty therefore in crediting the cases of this description, than in believing the cures which Valentine Gretrakes* and his predecessor Coker are said to have performed, or those which are recorded as having been effected by the royal touch.

Cases of this nature became more frequent as the superstition concerning relics gained ground; and here what began in credulity offered a tempting opportunity for fraudulent practices, and soon led to them. This mode of superstition was one of the corruptions with which

* For an account of this person, see Henry More's "Brief Discourse of Enthusiasm," sect. 58, with the Scholia thereon.

Christianity became tainted in its compromise with the practices of Pagan Rome. With the rites and ceremonies which were adopted because they impressed the senses of the people, the arts whereby the Heathen priests had been accustomed to delude them were introduced also. The use of relics was one of the easiest and most gainful: and it might also have seemed not only harmless but beneficial; for the same deceit which practised upon the weakness of humanity, administered to its wants. If the sufferer's malady were one which might be remedied by the force of imagination, the priest could call forth a faith which was not given to the physician; if the mind remained unaffected, and the remedial powers of the constitution were of themselves sufficient to resist and overcome the disease, in that case the dust, or the lotion, which the relic-dealer administered, was perfectly harmless, where the medical practitioner's prescription might have disturbed the course of nature; and if there was not less knavery in palming false relics upon popular faith, than there is in adulterating drugs, the fraud produced no injury to the patient. "Apologies," says Mr. D'Israeli,* "only account for the evil which they cannot alter."

* Curiosities of Literature, Second Series, vol. i. p. 12.

But it is due to justice, it is due to our common religion, to show where we can, how imperceptibly men were led from one delusion to another; that the corruptions which have disgraced Christianity arose at first more from credulity than deceit; and that when they had been matured into a system of fraud, that system was sometimes promoted by good men in good faith, who, while unconsciously deceiving others, were themselves deceived.

Bede is an example of this: he has lent his authority to a scheme of delusion, but it has been shown that his veracity is not in the slightest degree impeached by the wonders which he has recorded. The wonders themselves appear upon examination to be of four kinds: those which relate to relics constitute the largest class, and belong as much to the history of medicine as of miracles. Dreams form a second class; the third consists of stories in which artifice is apparent; the last of palpable falsehoods invented and propagated for the purpose of gain. You shall have examples of each, Sir, with all the exactness of reference that you have desired. It is necessary that I should produce them, because you have contradicted my assertion, that the Anglo-Saxon clergy practised upon the credulity of a barba-

rous people; and you have received public thanks for having confuted what the English Romanists are pleased to call my calumnies; as if in contradiction from you, confutation were necessarily implied. The task would not be supererogatory even if it were not thus called for, seeing that you appeal with Roman confidence to the succession of miracles in the Romish Church, and that the practitioners of that Church are as busy as ever, though perhaps not quite as expert in keeping up the succession at this time.

Neither Church, nor altar, nor standard of Christianity had been erected in the kingdom of Bernicia, till King Oswald set up a wooden cross at Heofenfeld, (Heavenfield) near the Roman wall, before the battle which he gained there. Pieces of that cross were afterwards carried away, as medicinal both for men and cattle, a chip imparting miraculous virtue to the water wherein it was dipt, or steept. The moss which grew upon it possessed equal efficacy; and a brother in the monastery at Hagulstad, who had lost the use of his arm in consequence of a fracture, found it restored by sleeping with some of this moss in his bosom.* Earth taken from the spot where Oswald was slain, to be

* L. 3. c. ii. p. 53.

administered in water, was in such request, that a pit had been excavated there five or six feet deep by persons who came from all parts to obtain it. A horse recovered from a fit by falling upon the sacred spot, and the owner of the horse, in consequence, carried a paralytic girl thither, who fell asleep when she was laid upon the miraculous ground, and awoke in perfect health.* A bag containing some of this earth was hung upon one of the posts in the wall of a house which took fire; the house was burnt to the ground, and that post alone remained unconsumed.† When Oswald's bones were translated, they were washed before they were deposited in their shrine; and the earth upon which the water was poured out proved of sovereign efficacy in expelling evil spirits from possessed persons.‡ A boy who had an intermittent fever was assured that if he went to the shrine and remained there till the hour for the regular fit was past, the disease would leave him: he went in faith, the paroxysm did not come at the usual time and it returned no more.§ The dust from St. Chad's coffin was an approved remedy for man and beast.‖ Sick persons were healed by being placed in the horse litter wherein St.

* L. 3. c. ix. p. 60. † L. 3. c. x. p. 60. ‡ L. 3. c. xi. p. 61.
§ L. 3. c. xii. p. 62. ‖ L. 4. c. i. p. 88.

Erkenwald used to be carried; but if they were too far away to be taken to it, a piece cut from the litter was taken to them, and the effect was the same.* Is there any thing more in these cases,† and in all such as these, (I could refer

* L. 4. c. 6. p. 90.

† "It appears," says Dr. Dixon, "from the concurring testimony of critics whose veracity cannot be called in question, that perfect security from contagion has often actually been derived from amulets, charms, the invocation of saints, and the touching of relics; means, which of themselves are inadequate to the production of so wonderful an effect. Without ascribing to them any inherent efficacy, and without having recourse with superstitious credulity, to the interposition of some supernatural agency, we are enabled to account for such facts on rational principles. The firm conviction impressed on the minds of the persons who used these means, that a miraculous power was exerted for their preservation, would inspire them with a degree of confidence and intrepidity, which might render them unsusceptible of the disease. A wise and judicious physician, therefore, who is more solicitous for the health of the community, than for the dignity of his profession, will not be desirous of exposing the absurdity of any charms, which the vulgar may employ with sanguine expectations of success. He will think it both cruelty and imprudence to wrest from them the foundation of their hopes of safety. Nor will he disdain the assistance and support which his own endeavours may receive from the force of opinions imbibed in childhood, and cherished with fond enthusiasm, although they may have originated in prejudice, and be repugnant to reason."—*Observations on the means of preventing Endemic Fever, annexed to the Life of Dr. Brownrigg*, p. 217.

you, to centuries of such,) than in cures performed by the Tractors, by Animal Magnetism, Dr. Brodum's Vegetable Balsam, Dr. Solomon's Balm of Gilead, or any other mode of quackery, or quack medicine, which, if it fails to do good, leaves the patient nothing the worse for its application?

Let it not be inferred that in imputing the Romish miracles of this class to mere quackery and the force of imagination, or not seldom to imposture on the part of the pretended patient, (by one or other of which they may all be explained,) an opinion is implied as if the course of events were in no degree to be influenced by prayer, and the interference of providential mercy. Such an opinion can be entertained by no one who reads and believes the Scriptures. I should belie mine own heart were I to dissemble its belief in the efficacy of prayer. Even as no one ever supplicated in vain for support in sorrow, nor for patience under suffering, nor if the prayer proceeded from a sincere and humble spirit, for strength to resist and overcome temptation, . . so it is my full persuasion that many are the lives which have been prolonged like Hezekiah's, or that of the ruler's son at Capernaum, when, though the provi-

dential interference has not been made manifest to others by any outward sign, it has been felt not the less surely by those in compassion to whom it was vouchsafed. The greater therefore is my indignation against those practitioners of religious quackery, those traders in superstition, who abuse the natural piety of man; who mock the soul which is "athirst for God, like as the hart desireth the water brooks:" and when it is panting for the well-spring of living waters, mislead it to the broken cisterns which they themselves have hewn out.

Mine, Sir, is neither a cold belief, nor a contracted. What Wesley said upon occasion of the cures exhibited at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, is, in my apprehension, a truth of wide as well as charitable application: "God makes allowance for invincible ignorance and blesses the faith notwithstanding the superstition." More than once have I expressed both in prose and verse a persuasion that—

> The prayers which from a pious heart proceed,
> Tho' misdirected reach the ear of heaven.

I would not condemn this form of superstition if it were not far more injurious in its general and sure effect, than it ever can be beneficial in

individual instances. Were it not for this consideration, I would say with Wordsworth, in his youth—

> If the rude waste of human error bear
> One flower of hope, oh pass and leave it there!

But it is the tendency of the Romish system always to interpose some crafty device of human invention between the soul and its Creator,..to intercept its worship,..to clip the wings of its aspirations,..to debase its thoughts, and deaden its very prayers. Well might the apostle warn his hearers against those false teachers who would "through covetousness make merchandize of them;* and well might the wisest of men expose the folly of him, who "for health calleth upon that which is weak; for life prayeth to that which is dead, for aid humbly beseecheth that which hath least means to help."†

This theme however appertains to another branch of our subject, and must not be pursued here. I proceed to the second class of miracles, that which relates to dreams, confining myself still, for the present, to the examples in Bede. And first, we have the wonderful vision of St. Fursey. The Venerable refers his readers to

* Peter ii. 11. 3. † Wisdom xiii. 18.

the book of the Saint's life, as a work from which he may receive much spiritual edification;* and as a sample he selects from it this edifying story which the Saint used sometimes to relate,† but only to those persons, who for the sake of being moved to repentance, requested to hear the awful account.

In one of his rapts the Angels, who conducted his spirit in its elevation, bade him look down upon the earth. It appeared to him like a dark valley lying far below; but he saw in the air four fires at little distance from each other, which the Angels informed him were at that time inflaming the world, and would at last consume it. The first was the fire of lying, which men kindle when they do not perform the promise made for them in baptism, that they shall renounce the Devil and all his works. The second, that of covetousness; and to this they add fuel when they prefer the riches of this world before the love of heavenly things.

* *De quibus omnibus si quis plenius scire vult,—legat—libellum vitæ ejus, et multum ex illo (ut reor) profectus spiritalis accipiet: in quibus tamen unum est quod et nos in hac historiâ ponere multis commodum duximus.* L. 3. c. 19. p. 68.

† *Curabat autem semper—omnibus opus virtutum et exemplis ostendere, et prædicare sermonibus: ordinem autem visionum suarum illis solummodò, qui propter desiderium compunctionis interrogabant, exponere volebat.* Ibid. 69.

The third, which was that of dissension, they increase when they are not afraid to offend their neighbours, even for matters of little moment. The fourth, that of iniquity, which is augmented when they think nothing of defrauding or despoiling the weak. Fursey was in no little alarm when he observed that these fires grew larger, and approached each other, and coalesced into one, and blazing then with prodigious flames moved towards him. But the Angels bade him not fear, for inasmuch as he had not kindled it, it would not burn him, its property being to try every one according to his deserts; so that the concupiscence of every individual, of whatever kind it had been, would be burnt in that fire, and the sinner thus be punished by a condign and appropriate torment. Accordingly when it reached them, one of the Angels went before him, and divided the flames, the two others, one on each side, warded them off to the right and left, and he past through unhurt, seeing on the way many Devils volant, some of whom pursued him with accusations. After this fearful passage he arrived among the souls in bliss, and here he recognised some priests of his own country who having discharged their office well were now enjoying their reward; and by them he was in-

structed in many things very profitable to himself, and for those who should chuse to attend to him. On his way back under the same escort, he had again to go through the fire, and as he was passing a door which stood open in the flames, the Devils snatched up a soul which they were tormenting and flung it at him. This unhappy soul was so burning hot, that it scorched his shoulder and his cheek where it touched him. The Angels of his guard tost it back, and told Fursey that he now felt the fire which he had helped to kindle; for this miserable soul, as he had perceived, was that of a man from whom he had accepted a garment when he was dying; and if he had not defiled his hands by receiving that gift from one who died in his sins, he would not now have tasted of his punishment.

Bede proceeds no farther with the relation. But as if to confirm the authority of the biographical account to which he had before referred, he adds, that there was an ancient monk then living in his monastery, to whom this story had been told by a pious man of undoubted veracity, who knew St. Fursey, and had heard him relate his visions: and said that though it was in winter, and during a severe frost, and the Saint wore only a single garment, and that a slight one, he perspired while relating them

as if it had been in the heat of summer, sometimes for horror, and sometimes for delight at recollecting what he had seen.*

You will probably, Sir, agree with me that this vision is as much a fiction as the dream of the Pilgrim's Progress, and that it was composed with a like intention of communicating religious instruction in an attractive and impressive form. But Bede believed it to have been an actual revelation, so it was represented to him by the old monk of Jarrow, and according to the monk's voucher St. Fursey himself related it as such. We know that in Bede's time it was recorded in the Saint's life, not as a fiction, but as a vision, seen by him when he was out of the body, and proved by the burn upon his shoulder and cheek. As a vision it is found in F. Alford's characteristic compilation; and that Jesuit, with all the self-complacency of his order,† sneers at the Centuriators for presuming

* Bede, t. iii. l. 3. c. 19. p. 67-9.

† He gives all that he finds in Bede *quia luculenter testata*, and then proceeds thus: *Nec moror quatuor Magdeburgicos, qui omnium sæculorum sanctitati irascentes, nihil probare volunt, quod cum nuperâ eorum et exoticâ factione non consentiat: quicquid contra in Sanctorum vitis legitur, pro deridiculo habent. Ita ergo illi has mirabiles visiones censent.* Ridicula sunt, *inquiunt*, quæ de Fursæo commemorat Vincentius, &c.—Beda eadem

to disbelieve it. We have it also in F. Cressy, not as allegorical, but as one of those "wonderful* visions which, in an excess of mind, our Lord revealed" to St. Fursey; and which this sincere and credulous compiler thought it necessary to set down, supposing it might be for the reader's edification. And Mr. Alban Butler, though too cautious to insert it in his prudent work, alludes to it nevertheless, in a manner which indicates no design of discrediting its authenticity as a true vision; and he refers to the ancient life published by the Bollandists, as if he believed that life, or was at least willing that those for whom he wrote should believe it.

If the vision alone had come down to us we might have thought that there was as little intention to deceive in the inventor, as there was in John Bunyan himself, a man whose integrity was not inferior to his genius, and when that is said no higher praise can be bestowed. I could

propemodo pugatur ex libro de vitâ ejus. Fuit ut apparet homo plenus superstitionibus, &c. *Ita illi; Vincentius ridicula commemorat: Beda negatur; Fursæus superstitiosus est. Aliter moderna factio stare non potest; Quæ tamen, his male materiata commentis, stat (quis non videt?) satis debiliter.*—Annales Ecc. Ang. Saxonicæ, t. ii. p. 250.

* Page 354.

allow also for the old monk of Jarrow's additions, or those of the pious person who had been the Saint's ear-witness; for we know that tales of this kind, or indeed of any kind, generally gain something in repetition;

mensuraque ficti
Crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adjicit auctor.

But the life of St. Fursey is extant. Shall we say that the deceitful intention belongs to his biographers, (for he had more than one,) who presented his innocent and well meant works of imagination for undoubted visions, and garnished his real adventures with correspondent miracles? Were this the case in the present instance, (as it certainly is with many other heroes of hagiology,) the charge of fraud would only be removed from one person to another, and rest with equal weight upon the Romish Church, which in all ages has endeavoured to support its own pretensions by encouraging, adopting and authenticating with its sanction such impostures. Let us however set this life before you; the originals are of unquestioned antiquity; and though I give it you in a form suited to the place, not as translation, you will find it composed with a fidelity that defies investigation. Your kinsman, Sir, has distilled it in his alembic till nothing but a *caput mortuum*

remains. The spirit of these legends lies in what he evaporates. They are not less valuable where they are false than where they are true, for the very falsehoods are facts in ecclesiastical history. They might be read as works of fiction sometimes for the mere amusement which they afford; the physiologist and the philosopher also might peruse them with advantage; and frequently some accidental truth occurs amid a tissue of inventions, to reward the historian's labour, and give light to the antiquary in his pursuits. You will perhaps say with me, in my great master's words, altering them a little for this occasion;

> The ways through which my weary steps I guide
> In this *religious* land of Faëry,
> Are so exceeding spacious and wide
> And sprinkled with such sweet variety
> Of all that *wondrous* is to ear or eye,
> That I nigh ravisht with rare thoughts delight
> My tedious travel do forget thereby:
> And when I 'gin to feel decay of might
> It strength to me supplies and cheers my dulled spright.

The reader may judge by the contents of this life whether it is wronging the clergy of Bede's age to accuse them of systematically deceiving the people; and he may perhaps see cause for concluding that St. Fursey himself assisted in

carrying on the scheme of pious fraud. The legend is not without some historical value; it may serve also as a sample (though but a modest one) of sacred romance, ... and of the authorities to which Mr. Alban Butler refers, ... when he is too sagacious to follow them.

ST. FURSEY.

Fursey, who flourished in the seventh century, was an Irish Saint, of royal extraction, and his sanctity (which was not uncommon) began, like Tristram Shandy's, misfortunes, before he was born. Phyltan, his father, son of Fundloga, King of Munster, was privately married to Gelgehe, the niece of Brendin, another Irish royalet of the race of Murchertach. Her father Aelfiud, being a hasty and violent man, no sooner discovered the natural consequences of their stolen intercourse, than he sentenced her to be burnt alive; upon which the unborn Saint, in the hearing of all present, pronounced this judicious opinion:* "Certes

* *Credibile id miraculum,* is the marginal note of the Bollandists, in apparent confirmation of what the biographer remarks upon this passage, for he seems here to have expected some inconvenient incredulity: *Quod miraculum reverâ illis videtur absurdum qui minus credunt esse omnia possibilia apud Deum,*

it is unbecoming for any man in authority to deliver his daughter to the flames, unless there be some reasonable and cogent cause!" This astonished all the hearers, except the person himself on whom it ought to have had most effect; but he persisted in his inhuman purpose, and, lest one fire should not be sufficient, ordered three to be kindled. King Brendin, his brother, hastened to the spot, and endeavoured in vain to mitigate him. Crowds assembled in horror to witness this unnatural, but (as it appears) not unlawful execution; and Gelgehe, as she was led towards the flaming pile, was scarcely able, for tears and agonizing sobs, to articulate a prayer; she did however collect strength to utter her supplications aloud, and implore God to save her unborn babe, if she herself were fated to be thus cruelly consumed, inasmuch as she called Him to witness

he says; bids them remember that the Psalmist says, "*quoniam omnia quæ voluit Dominus, fecit in cælo et in terrâ;*" refers to the ill-applied example of John the Baptist leaping at the salutation of the Virgin to his mother; affirms that St. Nicolas fasted twice a week before he was weaned; and asks, if Balaam's ass could be made to speak, why might not an unborn child? "*Credant igitur, credant, inquam, magnalia Dei, humanis sensibus incomprehensibilia; et potius collaudent, quam temerè vituperent cunctipotentis factoris Dei, præsertim in Sanctis suis, mirabilia opera.*" Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. p. 45.

that her single motive for consenting to this secret marriage was the hope of having a child who should be devoted to his service. Her prayers were heard; and upon the spot which her tears had moistened, a spring gushed forth so copiously that it extinguished the three fires. Aelfiud could not resist this miracle, but his heart was not softened, and he banished his daughter and her husband.

Upon this Phyltan took her to visit his uncle, who was no less a personage than the eminent Saint and Navigator St. Brandon, at that time residing in his monastery upon the Isle of Cluainfert. The good Saint received the exiles with kindness, lodged them in the guests' apartment, and regaled them with plenty of the best fare. When they had all retired to rest, so great a light was seen in the chamber of the married pair, that the person who had charge of the hospice, supposed it to be on fire, and communicated his fears to St. Brandon. The Abbot, understanding what it was likely to prove, was not alarmed. Taking with him the more pious of his monks and clergy, he went into the room silently, and found them asleep, safe, and unconscious of the celestial splendour in which they were embathed; so he blest them as they slept, made the sign of the cross

on all sides of the chamber, and withdrew with his train as quietly as he had entered. In due time the wonderful child was born, and St. Brandon, knowing by revelation that he had received the Spirit, enjoined his clergy and people to observe a three days fast before the christening, and then baptized him Fursey, a name significant of the virtues wherewith he was endowed.

Under this holy kinsman the young Saint was brought up, with all the advantages of worldly wealth and spiritual instruction, by which he profited so well as to preach during his boyhood. He was still under this tutelage, when a remarkable circumstance occurred which made his supernatural gifts known. A brother and sister of King Brendin's family died in the flower of their youth; they were twins, and singularly beautiful, and not less amiable; and the people, to testify their exceeding grief and affection, wanted to eat them, for such a custom is said* to have prevailed

* ...*nullatenus possent eorum corpora humari, quærentibus omnibus, præ dolore phrenesim patientibus, ea membratim rapi.* Upon this there is the following annotation: "*Exponit hæc Desmaius ex Joanne Mieloto et Legendario Ecclesiæ Peronensis, quod populus, paganico adhuc ejus gentis ritu insaniens, regiorum horum puerorum corpora vorare cupierit; quæ ut pater eorum furori*

among the unconverted Irish, as among the Tapuyas of Brazil. The wiser friends of the deceased, fearing that the bodies would be torn to pieces with this intent, before it could be possible to bury them, shipt them by stealth and sent them off by night to St. Brandon, that he might inter them in his island. Whether they were entrusted to rapacious hands, or, as according to another account, the vessel was captured by pirates on the way, so it was that the bodies were plundered, stript, and laid during the night stark naked, before the cell of St. Fursey. At day-break, when he opened his door, meaning as usual to visit the Church at that early hour, there he saw them; and, being filled with compassion, because they were of his own age, he immediately besought God that in the immensity of his mercy He would restore them to life. Before the prayer was concluded it was granted, and the dead arose in perfect health, marvelling where they were, and as much ashamed when they perceived

subtraheret, ad Brandanum clam miserit, isthic sepelienda. Plura de fera'i hoc barbarorum more congerit Desmaius, quibus tamen fidem non facit eum tunc apud Hibernos viguisse. Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. 47. N. a.

Desmaius, who is here referred to, was a Canon of Peronne, who published a French life of St. Fursey in 1607.

their plight as Adam and Eve after the transgression. Fursey, with ready considerateness, shut them up in his own cell while he provided garments for them; then he led them into the Church, where they passed the whole day in returning thanks for their resurrection. This done, he asked them in what manner they wished to dispose of themselves; supposing, perhaps, as was usual for persons after such an event, that they would think it proper to enter upon a monastic life. But they were of royal parentage, and were desirous of returning to their country and their parents, and the enjoyments from which they had been cut off by death. How to get back was the difficulty; the vessel from which they had been carried on shore in that unseemly and yet fortunate manner, was gone; they had no other, and they besought him with tears in their eyes that he would assist them with means of transport. Perhaps they thought, as well they might, after what they had experienced, that this was an easy thing for St. Fursey. He happened to have in his hand a writer's rule, which he cast into the sea, commanding it to show them the way, and bidding them follow it. Away went the obedient rule, true as the needle, to its direction; the brother and sister followed fear-

lessly on foot; crowds flocked to the shore when they beheld two persons walking on the water; the astonishment was heightened when those persons were recognised for the dead restored to life. The rule was taken up and deposited in a church, there to be preserved and venerated in honour of God and St. Fursey; and the Saint received a visit from King Brendin, his kinsmen and people, to solicit the benefit of his prayers.

But bad passions were not more prevalent in the minds of the heathen Gods and Goddesses than they were in monasteries, even in this age, when Saints were more numerous upon earth (and especially in Ireland) than Demigods and Heroes had ever been in the environs of Olympus. The monks of Cluainfert began to envy St. Fursey, and consequently to hate him, insomuch that he found it expedient to withdraw. He departed, therefore, with St. Brandon's permission, and founded a monastery near the lake of Orbsen,* in the diocese of Tuam, where the church, called after him Kill-fursa, stood in later times. Thither his grandfather, Aelfiud, came in sackcloth and ashes to confess his sins, and entreat forgiveness.

* Alban Butler, vol. i. 204. stereotype edition.

for having attempted to burn him alive before he was born. The absolution thus humbly asked was freely given. Soon afterwards Phyltan, his father, succeeded to the throne of Munster, and it was about this time that the Saint was favoured with his visions.

The first occurred when he was on the way to visit his parents: a sudden illness seized him on the road; it was not so severe as to render him incapable of proceeding, and he had advanced, leaning on his companion's arm for support, nearly to the end of his journey, when the hour of vespers arrived, and he stopt to begin his even-song: a darkness then came over his sight, his limbs failed, the body lost all sense, and he was borne, dead to all appearance, into the nearest house. Unconscious of all that was done to him there, he in this trance saw the four hands of two Angels who carried him through the air, and the four wings of each, and the snowy whiteness of their feathers; but their bodies he could not see, because of their exceeding brightness. A third went before armed with a white shield and a fiery sword. He heard also the song of many thousand Angels, and observed, as far as he could distinguish their faces, that they had all a strong family likeness to each other. It was not till one of

these Angels ordered his conductors to carry back the soul they were escorting, that he knew himself to be out of the body; then he expressed a great unwillingness to be so remanded; they promised, however, to come for him again; and while they were singing "The God of Gods shall be seen in Zion," the sweetness of that strain possessed him so entirely, that his soul re-entered its earthly vehicle without knowing how. This was just at cock-crow: he heard voices of lamentation, . . . the mourners by whom his corpse was surrounded, saw the cloth stir with which his face had been covered; they instantly removed it, and to their astonishment the man whom they had been watching through the night, and deploring as dead, sate up and looked about him. He was grieved that there was no prudent person at hand to whom he might repeat all that he had seen; however, he lost no time in confessing and communicating, that he might be ready when the Angels should come for him, fully expecting the speedy fulfilment of their promise. During that day and the following he continued ill; at midnight, when his relations were about his bed, his feet became cold, his hands stiffened as they were extended in prayer, a second trance ensued, and he

had then that vision a part of which is related by Bede.

In this second expedition to the spiritual world, he was as little able to see the faces of the Devils by reason of their exceeding blackness, as those of the Angels for excess of light; but he could discern that they had long necks; that they were horribly lean, and that their heads were swoln to the shape of a brass kettle. They threw fiery darts at him, which were received on the shield of his protector; and the uproar with which they made their assaults was so great that he thought it must have been heard over the whole earth. On this occasion he was able to observe the manner in which his soul re-entered the body. While he was beholding that body as a loathsome corpse, which he did not recognize, and was unwilling to approach, he saw the breast open to let in the truant lodger. The Angel assured him that when he was reviving spring water would be poured over him, and he would feel no other pain than that of the burn which he had received in spirit. On a sudden he found himself once more a whole man, stretched on the bed as before, and surrounded by his friends; the cold affusion was administered, and sitting up amid the astonished company, Fursey re-

lated his adventures, and displayed the burn in proof of their reality.

After this he itinerated throughout all Ireland, preaching and casting out devils, ... an amiable person to the good, a terrible one to the wicked, an aweful one to the nobles and Kings. On the anniversary night of his last rapt a similar fit came on, but his heart continued to beat, and he saw only a single Angel, who announced to him that he was to continue preaching twelve years from that time. Ten of those years he remained in Ireland, and then, no longer able to bear the fatigue occasioned by the multitudes who followed him; and perceiving also the envy which he had excited, he withdrew with some of his monks and two of his brothers, Foilan and Ultan by name, (both Saints,) into a small island,* and proceeding from thence through the country which the Britons still possessed,† he found his way into the kingdom of the East Saxons. Sigebert, the first Christian King of that people, (that Sigebert to whom fond antiquaries have ascribed the foundation of the University of Cambridge,)

* F. Alford (ii. 251.) supposes this island to have been Iona.

† Wales, according to the Bollandists, ... but more probably the country of the Strath-Cluyd Britons.

received him joyfully, and enabled him to found a monastery at Burgh Castle, then called Cnobersburg, and supposed to have been the Garianonum of the Romans. We are now in the region of realities, and on historic ground. The foundation of a monastery was in those days so great and unequivocal a public good, that a very general spirit of liberality was excited on such occasions. The East Saxons are described as presenting it, some with farms, some with woods, some with fisheries, and some with flocks and herds; others offered silken vestments embroidered with gold and gems, others church vessels of silver and gold; some there were who gave male and female servants, and some who made over their own persons with all that they possessed to the convent, and, assuming a religious habit, devoted themselves in servitude to God. When the building was finished, there was no bell for summoning the monks and people to their devotions. Either there had been some neglect in procuring one, or it had been deemed unbecoming for such a personage as St. Fursey to obtain one by ordinary means. He therefore prayed for a bell, and even the prayers of William Huntington, the S.S. when his wardrobe required replenishing, were not more exactly answered:

for the son of a widow was brought to the convent for interment; an Angel appeared before all the attendants at the funeral with a bell in his hand, and gave it to the Saint,... the Saint rung the bell, ... and at the first stroke of its miraculous clapper, the young man was restored to life.* The patient in this miracle became a monk in consequence, and obtained a birth in the convent instead of the churchyard. But the bell confined its powers from that time to securing all persons from danger in a thunderstorm who should be within hearing of its sound; and there are attestations upon certain experience that it continued to possess and exercise this useful property as late as the fifteenth century.

But promising as the foundation of this monastery had been, it was not destined to flourish. Fursey's continuance in the country was neither long nor tranquil. First he left his convent to lead a hermit's life in the wilds with his brother Ultan. But the Pagan Mercians infested the kingdom; he was forcibly brought from his retirement to assist the King with his

* "*Multa similia campanarum portenta in vitis Sanctorum Britanniæ et Hiberniæ occurrunt, et nonnulla quidem satis testata.*" This is part of a note, either by Bolland or Henschenius, on this story.—Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. 51.

counsel in that time of danger; and perceiving that his establishment* could not be supported, he dismissed the monks and departed for France, on his way to Rome, according to one account, and in obedience to the admonition of an Angel, though Sigebert would not allow him to depart till he had bound himself by an oath to return. It appears, however, that he had been invited over to France, which was then enjoying a rare interval of prosperity during the best age of the Merovingian kings. There he obtained the patronage of Clovis II. and his Mayor of the Palace, Erchenwald, whom the monastic biographer always designates by the title of the Patrician. Under their patronage he built the great monastery of Latiniac, afterwards called Lagny, on the Marne, six leagues from Paris. He performed many miracles in France, casting out devils, raising the dead, and healing the sick; and if it were not convenient for him to attend in person, and lay his hand upon the sick, he sent his walking-stick, which did as well. This was a most valuable walking-stick: when he fixed upon Latiniac as the site for his monastery, he stuck it in the

* Some ruins of the building, however, are still shown at Burgh Castle.

ground, and immediately a fountain* gushed forth, which not only supplied the inhabitants with water, but was endued with medicinal virtue.

The Saint was on his way to England, in fulfilment of his promise to revisit Essex; when he heard the voice of an Angel summon him to his reward in these words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" This happened at a place near Dourlens, in Picardy, which Duke Haymo had given him for having raised his daughter from

* Another of his hydraulic miracles was performed in a worse temper, during a visit to his native country. It was his custom always to begin the sabbath at Nones on the Saturday, and so strictly to observe it, that if he were travelling, he suspended his journey from that time. Being on the road one Saturday to a city of which a certain St. Parmedin (no otherwise known than by this incidental mention of his name) was bishop, and meaning to arrive in good time, a churchwarden, who knew his custom, and wished to disappoint both the Saint and the numerous persons who had assembled on account of his expected arrival, rung the Nones-bell before its time. Fursey understood the malicious motive. He halted immediately beside a spring of St. Parmedin's making, (for the Saints were great water-finders, or rather fountain creators;) there he remained the whole Sunday in devotion; and when he departed he punished the whole city, something unreasonably for the churchwarden's offence, by removing the spring two leagues off. Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. 51. Not. a.

the dead. The place was then called Macerias, afterwards Forsheim, which is, being interpreted, Fursey's house. He had promised this Duke to inform him of his death, whenever it might occur; and accordingly, as Haymo was sitting at dinner with two priests, and three waxen lights before them, St. Fursey appeared to him, and vanished as suddenly as he came. None but the Duke saw this apparition; he understood what it betokened, and rising instantly from table set off in haste with his whole household to attend the funeral. He arrived in good time, when the villagers and monks and clergy were assembled, and companies of virgins bringing spices fitting for the interment of this blessed pearl.* There had been a twofold motive for Duke Haymo's speed; he was not more desirous to honour the departed Saint, than he was solicitous to secure his body. The Patrician Erchenwald was upon the same scent, and had set out with a considerable force, at night, as soon as the troops could be collected after news of the death was known. When he drew nigh Macerias and learned that Haymo was there, ready to defend

* *Cunctis pagensibus congregatis tam monachis quam clericis, ac virginum turmis, cum aromatibus beato margarito ad sepeliendum congruentibus.*—Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. 52.

the treasure of which he had taken possession, he halted upon the river Authie, and sent messengers to that Duke requiring him to give up the body to King Clovis, who had best right to it, seeing that St. Fursey had baptized his son, and had built the monastery of Latiniac in his domains, and consecrated it, and illustrified it with many miracles. But if Haymo would not admit the cogency of this reasoning, he must prepare for battle on the morrow, when the lot of arms would determine with which of the two claimants the Saint was to abide in person,* as a patron. Duke Haymo answered, that the King of Heaven had brought him first to the spot; that the holy personage in question had raised his daughter from the dead, which was a greater thing than baptizing a son for Clovis; that he had chosen, as was evident, to depart for the Kingdom of Heaven from a place which he had given him, and had moreover appeared to him to notify his decease. But he added, it would be an unbecoming thing if in such a quarrel the sound were to be hurt in presence of him by whose merits the sick were wont to be healed, and the living slain before the body of one who used to raise the dead. He proposed, therefore,

* —*cui nostrum debeat præsentialiter advocatus esse.*—Acta SS. Jan. t. ii. 52.

if the Patrician were willing, that two bulls which had never been broken to the yoke should be harnessed to the hearse; and that both parties, following in peace, should abide by the event, and acknowledge that whatever course the animals might take was the direction appointed by Providence. The proposal was accepted. Before the carriage on which the corpse was placed was in motion, a woman who had been blind applied the pall to her eyes and instantly received her sight. The bulls took the straight road to Peronne, to the great joy of Erchenwald and his people, who went dancing after them with delight. While they were on their way, a cripple was borne in men's arms toward the hearse; the bulls were stopt, in expectation of what would follow, and as soon as he had touched the bier, the use of his limbs was restored. During the halt which this occasioned, another armed force appeared in sight under a third claimant, who proved to be Duke Berchar of Laodunum, or Lugdunum Clavatum, now Laon. This chief threatened Erchenwald with death unless the sacred body were given up to him: for he, he affirmed, had the best claim to it, having been the person who invited St. Fursey over from beyond sea; having been at the charge of bringing

him over, and having always dealt so bountifully with him to the extent of his power, that the Saint would have returned to visit him if the Patrician would have permitted it. Another compromise was suggested by the more prudent men of all parties. The bulls were unyoked, and two boys of seven years old, who, of course, could not move the carriage without supernatural assistance, were fastened to it in their stead. They drew it with ease and rapidity to a place called Swan's-hill,* at Peronne, and there stopt in the portico of a Church which Fursey had begun to erect at the Patrician's expense, but which he had neither completed nor consecrated. The Dukes Haymo and Berchar acquiesced dutifully then, though sorrowfully, in their disappointment, and departed in peace.

Erchenwald spared neither diligence nor cost in finishing the Church which he had promised the living Saint to found, and which was now to be enriched with so great a treasure as the dead one. But, like Job, he had a wife; Leutsinda was her name; she objected violently to the enormous expenditure wherein he had engaged, and called him a madman who

* *Mons Cygnorum.*

would thus, for the sake of an unknown and dead foreigner, dissipate the substance which ought to be preserved as a maintenance for her, and an inheritance for their children. If she was in an angry mood when she thus remonstrated with him, his answer was not in a milder spirit. He called her fool and worst of women; bade her call to mind how he had prospered in the world from the time when he acquired the Saint's friendship; told her to consider what miracles had been worked for establishing his pretensions to this treasure in opposition to two other claimants; said it was useless to reason upon the matter: quoted the poet to her,..

.... varium et mutabile semper
Fœmina;

and finally exhorted her to repent in time, and ask forgiveness for having in her foolishness sinned against the Saint, lest he should be angry. She replied, that she cared nothing for one who had been dead thirty days, and was now, of course, stinking. Erchenwald denied her conclusion: the Power, he said, whom St. Fursey had served day and night would preserve his blessed body from corruption, and upon this point she might satisfy herself when

it was carried into the Church. The proof was afforded on that same day, for the Saints Eligius and Aubert arrived to consecrate the Church. In their presence and before the great concourse of people who had assembled from all parts to be present at the solemnity, Leutsinda, persisting in irreverence, ordered the pall to be lifted and the body exposed. Immediately she cried out that she was stricken blind for her impiety, and falling on the ground before the living professors of sanctity, she bewailed her wickedness at their feet, and intreated them that they would beseech the offended St. Fursey to restore her sight. They accordingly began to intercede; the assembled multitude, struck with compassion, as well as horror, joined in their supplications; a miracle of mercy was announced; and Leutsinda, being now enabled to see the holy body, perceived that it was as fresh as at the moment when life had departed. His brother Saints then took it in their arms, chaunting a hymn as they bore the precious burden, and deposited it near the altar, laying with it an abundance of spices and perfumes.

Erchenwald established a convent of Regular Canons here, and endowed it largely. St. Fursey, while he lived, had deposited in the

Church which previously existed there, the remains of those holy men Patrick and Beoan and Meldan, formerly his companions, whose souls he had recognized in Heavén when he was carried thither in spirit, and whose bodies it seems he must have brought from Ireland. These appear to have been removed to the new edifice. At the end of four years, the wealth, which had been collected there in offerings, was entrusted by the Patrician, with some addition from his own stores, to St. Eligius, that this Saint, who had been the king's goldsmith before he became a Bishop, might construct an elaborate shrine for Fursey. The body, when it was deposited in this costly receptacle, was found still uncorrupt, and more spices and perfumes were added to keep it so. There it remained in this genuine odour of sanctity till the year 1256, when in the presence of King St. Louis it was removed into a new shrine, the translation being certified by the king's seal and those of the prelates who assisted. Handkerchiefs used to be inserted through a little window behind the altar, to touch the place whereon the body had first been laid, and derive a sanative influence from the virtue which it had left there. And of such efficacy was the body itself, that to its presence

in Peronne the deliverance of that city is specially ascribed when it was besieged by the troops of the Emperor Charles V. under the Count of Nassau.

LETTER IV. (continued.)

Like as a ship that through the ocean wide
Directs her course unto one certain coast,
Is met of many a counter-wind and tide,
With which her winged speed is let and crost,
And she herself in stormy surges tost;
Yet making many a board and many a bay,
Still winneth way, ne hath her compass lost;
Right so it fares with me in this long way,
Whose course is often staid, yet never is astray.

Some twenty years ago, Sir, I accompanied my old friend Davy, (not then Sir Humphry,) to the top of Skiddaw; it was the first time he had ascended that noblest of the English mountains, which for nearly half my life has been to me as a neighbour. When we had reached the summit, and enjoyed for a while the splendid prospect from the foot of one of those stone piles which the boys erect there, he cast his eyes upon the fragments of slate, with which the ground is strewn, and stooping to pick up one as he spake, said "I dare say I shall find something here!" The words

were hardly uttered when he gave one of those slight starts which indicate pleasurable surprize, and added, "I have found something indeed! Here is a substance which has lately been discovered in Saxony, and has not been met with elsewhere till now." It was the chiastolite. I introduce this little anecdote with the freedom which the easy forms of epistolary composition allow, not because it is to me a pleasant recollection while the distinguished philosopher to whom it relates is living and flourishing in the enjoyment of those honours which he has deserved so well, but because it is to the point in this place, and of useful application. "Seek and ye shall find," are words to be borne in mind as well in exploring the field of history as of science.

We shall find something in the legend of St. Fursey,.. which I have not selected as remarkable either for extravagance or any thing else, but have taken it because it came in our way. The first part of the story is manifestly the growth of his own country: it has the characteristic stamp of Irish sacred romance,.. a raciness as peculiar as the *smaak* of the Cape wines, and which any person versed in hagiologic reading may immediately recognize. It was indeed originally written in Irish, as many of the

Irish legends were; because Latin, which in those days was in all old Christian countries still a living tongue, insomuch that the women could both speak and write it, was very little known in Ireland,* that island not having been subdued and civilized by the Romans. Bolland, when he commenced his great and invaluable collection, inserted such of these legends as occurred in the order of the Kalendar, without remorse; and even apologized, in his General Preface, for the coarseness and grotesqueness of the miracles which they contained,† as being

* *Non difficulter lector animadverteret, unde tam multa in Sanctorum Hibernorum vitas irrepserint aut fabulosa, aut fabulosis simillima; necnon cur ab initio nascentis in Hibernid Ecclesiæ, non modo Latinâ linguâ (quâ solâ omnes Romani quondam Imperii nationes, etiam diu post ejus extinctionem, usi sunt in conscribendis publicis rerum gestarum monumentis seu sacris seu profanis) sed etiam Hibernicâ patriâ scribi cœperint Sanctorum vitæ; ut de coævis Patricio auctoribus Jocelinus testatur. Latina enim lingua, quæ subjectis Romano Imperio in occidente atque Africâ provinciis, abolitâ antiquâ patriâ, facta fuerat naturalis, etsi non sine depravatione multiplici; Hibernis peregrina omnino erat, nec nisi sacra tractantibus, et domi vel peregrè operosius eruditis cognita; cum alibi etiam fœminæ Latinè nossent et loqui et scribere.*—Acta SS. Mart. t. ii. p. 517. Comm. Præv. ad vitam S. Patricii.

† *Quia vero in — patrandis prodigiis sese ferè simplicitati ac fidei hominum Deus attemperat, ideo Hibernorum, Scotorum, Britannorum tam qui Albionem, quàm qui Armoricam Galliæ*

suited to the simplicity of the people. Henschenius entertained for some years as little scruple concerning them; but at length, the latter and his colleagues found that the Reformation had carried some light even into the Spanish Netherlands, and that, capacious as the public swallow was, it would not take down such camels as these. A sort of apology* there-

oram incolunt, plane portentosæ sunt Sanctorum vitæ, atque ex miraculis, ferè incredibilibus, contextæ; quia apud eas gentes et constantia fidei egregia, et vitæ simplicitas ac candor olim rarus extitit; vel certè quia simpliciores scriptores. Neque facta isthic plurima olim fuisse miracula, poterit quisquam, quamvis malitiosus, pernegare, cum etiamnum hodie, post abrogatas ab hæreticis majorum cæremonias cultumque Cælitum, ipsa tamen loca eorum honori olim dicata, sacrosancta adhuc esse videantur, et plurimis splendescant miraculis."—Acta SS. Jan. t. i. xxxiv.

St. Winifred's well is mentioned as an instance. Even the heretics frequented it, the Jesuit says, and when they were asked why they acted thus in opposition to what their clergy preached, they would answer that they cared nothing for what was gabbled in the pulpit, the water had always been good for them and their cattle, and their fathers before them, and its virtue was owing either to St. Winifred, or God himself.

* "*Istiusmodi vitas non aliter operi nostro inseramus quàm ut legendas magnâ cum indulgentiâ erga simplicissimas gentes, et tamdiu solum tolerandas, quamdiu certiora et lectu digniora monumenta desunt, ex quibus aliqua Sanctorum illorum hauriatur notitia; cum ad hoc saltem serviant, ut publicam eorum in populo venerationem antiquam, superinductis hereseon nebulis obscuratam, faciant iterum splendere apud posteros, deque loco ac*

fore was made; the richer stories were withheld as the collection advanced, and such as were admitted were introduced with a Jesuitical reservation, containing an avowal not less remarkable than incautious, that such as these stories were, they served to keep up the popular veneration for Saints, concerning whom nothing certain was known.

For the indigenous part of his history, that is, for his prenatal performances, and the other miracles of his early life, our present subject St. Fursey is as little entitled to discredit as to honour. They are clearly some of those fictions (in number exceeding all others) which, however you may seek to disguise the fact from yourself, Sir, or to qualify it to the world, were falsehoods invented, propagated, and sanctioned for the purpose of keeping up a system of priestcraft and delusion. He had as little to do with these, as with the posthumous cures and other wonders which his relics are said to have performed. Can we acquit him as fairly of having brought forward his visions, not as inventions, but as sacred and supernatural manifestations? I think not. The importance which he attached to the bodies of those persons whose souls, ac-

tempore quibus vixerunt et obierunt subindè curiosum piumque lectorem edoceant.—Acta SS. Mai. t. iii. p. 585.

cording to the vision, he had seen in bliss, (and of whose sanctity nothing more is known,) appears to show that he made the fable current in France, and thus corroborates the statement which represents him as exhibiting the scar upon his face in proof of its truth. And the caution which the old monk said he observed in relating his story only to persons who were in a state of mind that predisposed them for believing it, tends to the same inference. The French part of his legend lies in the region of realities, and may afford some assistance towards developing the system of Saint-Errantry which forms as conspicuous a part of history in this age, as Knight-Errantry in the succeeding centuries. But for the present we must return to the miraculous visions recorded by Bede; from which St. Fursey led us into this digression.

A little before the death of the first Abbess of Barking, St. Edilburga, one of her nuns, Thorithgid by name, who had assisted greatly in keeping up the discipline of the convent, but for nine years had been undergoing the purification of severe bodily affliction, had a wonderful vision. For going out of her chamber at the earliest break of day, she distinctly saw a human form, clothed in a garment brighter than

the sun, rising into the air from that part of the nunnery in which the dormitory was placed. Looking more intently, she perceived that it was drawn upward by certain cords which exceeded gold in brightness; and in this manner it was elevated out of sight into the heavens which opened to receive it. Sister Thorithgid did not doubt that this betokened the near dissolution of some one in the community whose soul would be raised to heaven by virtue of her good works, even as the apparition which she had seen was hoisted by the golden cords. And in a few days St. Edilburga died accordingly. This is another instance of typical fiction gravely represented as fact.

We come now to what Bede calls *miraculum memorabile et antiquorum simile*.* I know not, Sir, whether you will listen to it "with a sigh" of serious belief, or "a smile" of scornful indignation. But those readers who, like me, can take undiminished delight in the Pilgrim's Progress and the Arabian Tales, will find some interest in the recital; and it is necessary for my purpose. You have called for proofs, and it must be my business to produce full and satisfactory illustrations of the Romish superstition as it existed in the age of the Heptarchy,

* L. 4. c. ix. p. 92.

and from that age downward. In that part of Northumberland which was called Incuningun, there resided a certain person, Drithelm by name, who with his family had always led a pious life. This man died one evening, after an illness which had reduced him to extremity; but early the next morning, he came to life again, and sate up in his bed, to the great alarm of those who were watching his corpse. His wife was the only person who ventured to remain in the room, trembling with fear; but he comforted her with the assurance, that though he had been actually dead, he was now nevertheless permitted to live a little while longer among men, only his course of life must be unlike what it had been. Upon this he arose, repaired to the oratory of the village, and prayed there awhile; then divided his substance into three parts, one of which he assigned for his wife, another for his children, the third he distributed in alms to the poor upon the spot, as if to rid himself of it: and having done this, he went to Melrose, and took up his abode there for the rest of his days in a retired cell upon the banks of the river, which the Abbot had prepared for him. The austerities which he practised convinced all persons that he had seen terrible things during

his excursion to the world of souls; and the account which he gave answered to that expectation.

He related that one of a shining countenance, and attired in shining garments, guided him when he was dead toward the quarter where the sun* rises at midsummer. They walked together in silence, till they came to a place where there was on the left a valley of great width and depth, and which seemed to be infinitely long. On one side of this valley there were raging flames, and on the other cold blasts not less violent, driving hail and snow before them; and both the burning and the frozen regions were full of human souls, who, as if seeking relief which it was not possible to find, rushed to and fro from the fire into the frost, and from the frost into the fire, either

* It appears by Pierce Plowman that this was thought the right direction—

"And alle that han welle ywroght wenden thei shulle
Estwarde to hevene."

Whitaker's Edition, p. 19.

This notion is not found in the old printed copies. There the passage runs thus:—

And tho that work wel, as holy write telleth,
And ende as I ere sayd, in truth that is the best,
May be siker that their soules shal wende to heaven.

ff. 6. Edition 1550."

torment being alike insupportable. They were so hideously deformed, and their punishment visibly so dreadful, that he supposed these must be the places appointed for the damned; but his conductor, who saw his very thoughts, answered them and said, "No! this is not Hell, as thou supposest."

They proceeded till the region, growing more and more obscure, became so utterly dark at last that he could distinguish nothing except the shape of the lucid garments of his guide. Suddenly they came upon a deep pit, from whence globes of fire rose without intermission into the air, and fell again into the abyss out of which they were exploded. There, to Drithelm's unutterable horror, his conductor disappeared, leaving him, as it seemed, to his fate. And now he could distinguish that these fiery globes were full of human souls, which like sparks carried up with the smoke, were borne aloft, and then, as if caught in an eddy of vapour, were resorbed into the pit; and the stench which issued with the vapour, an unexpressible, uncomparable, unimaginable stench, filled that whole place of darkness. The poor Northumbrian's soul stood trembling at all this as well it might: afraid to remain where it was, and yet more afraid to move, and not

knowing what would be the end. Presently he heard behind him a sound as of persons piteously lamenting their miserable fate, mingled with loud shouts of brutal mockery, like the uproar of a rabble* rejoicing over their captured enemies. Among these souls who were thus being hurried to the place of bale, he perceived one that was shaven and shorn, a layman's and a woman's; he saw them plunged into the pit, their conductor plunging with them; and he heard their cries and the laughter of the fiends growing fainter and fainter as they sunk, till the sounds were lost in the confused and promiscuous uproar which ascended.

But Drithelm had little leisure to compassionate others. Certain dark spirits armed with fiery tongs ascended from the abyss; he felt the fire which issued from their fierce eyes, and which they breathed from mouth and nostrils; the stench which they emitted with their burning breath was not less dreadful than the flames, and with their tongs they endeavoured to seize him for their prey. Happily they had no power to reach him; and as he stood looking round on all sides in horror, and almost in de-

* *Quasi vulgi indocti captis hostibus insultantes*;—a feature of the age.

spair, if there were none to deliver him, he beheld in the darkness a distant light as of a star, which drew nearer and nearer, and when it came nigh the evil spirits fled. It was his Guide, who had thus returned, and leading him now in a south-east direction brought him ere long into the clear and lightsome air. Before them there was a huge wall, so high and extending so far on either side, that he could neither discern its summit nor where it terminated: nor was there door in it, nor window, nor entrance of any kind. While he was marvelling wherefore his Guide should lead him toward a place where it was impossible to pass, he found himself on the top in a spacious and most pleasant field, so redolent of sweetest flowers that their perfume drove out the infernal stench which had pervaded him. The light of this happy place exceeded that of the brightest noon, and the field was filled with innumerable companies of persons clothed in white garments, and rejoicing in their bliss. Drithelm could not but think that this must be the Kingdom of Heaven, which he had heard preached of so often; but the Guide, again reading his thoughts, made answer "No! this is not Heaven, as thou supposest."... They proceeded toward a light, which made the splendour even of these

happy fields appear like darkness: and into an odour which put out the former perfume, as that had expelled the taint of the pit; a ravishing harmony of jubilant songs was heard; but when Drithelm was in the height of hope that he should enter into this blessedness, his Conductor stopt short, turned round, and . . . . led him back by the way which they had come.

The return, however, was not so horrible as the journey outward had been, and on the way his Guide explained to him all that he had seen. The souls in the Valley of Frost and Fire were those, he said, which having delayed to confess and amend their lives while it was yet time, had not repented till they were at the point of death. Yet because in that last moment they confessed and were contrite, these should at the day of judgment be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven; and many of them, before that day, would be relieved and delivered by the prayers, alms, fasting, and more especially the masses of the living.* The pit which they had past was the mouth of Hell, and the souls that entered it, must abide there to all eternity. The happy field was the resting place of such

* *Celebratio missarum* is the simple expression of Bede, which Cressy, (p. 501) translates "celebrating *the most holy sacrifice*."

as had lived a virtuous life, but whose works had not been of that perfection which could entitle them to immediate admission into Heaven; they must tarry therefore till the day of judgment before they could attain the Beatific Vision and enter into the joys of that Kingdom. The confines of that kingdom he had seen; and they who in their words, works, and thoughts had attained perfection, were admitted there as soon as they left the body. He told him that it depended upon himself to obtain a place there among the blessed; and then the Northumbrian, though grievously reluctant to re-enter his fleshly tabernacle, found himself alive in his bed.

This was the story which Drithelm, like St. Fursey, related to those persons only whom he judged to be fit auditors. Alfred the Wise was one, King of Northumbria, who for his learning and virtue is thought to have served as an example* to his illustrious namesake. It was by that King's desire that Drithelm was admitted into the monastery at Melrose, and there Alfred used to visit him as often as he went that way. He lived in a retired cell,

* A very interesting account of this excellent person is given in Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons.—*Book iii. ch.* 9.

apart, as it appears, from the community, yet not wholly either as a recluse or a hermit. And frequently, for the sake of mortifying the flesh, he would go into the river, even when it was necessary first to break the ice, and standing there sometimes up to the waist, sometimes to the neck, recite his prayers, or his psalter, as long as it was possible to endure the cold; and when he came out of the water, he would never change his wet garments. If he were asked at such times how he could bear the extremity of the cold, his answer was, I have seen colder places than this!*

Make all you can of this vision, Sir. There can be no question that it was believed by Alfred of Northumbria, and by the Venerable Bede: and I am as little disposed to doubt the intentional veracity of the original relator, as his sincere fanaticism. Take the story as genuine, and for its full weight: to what that amounts, we shall see when we have gone through the other examples of the same class.

The first of these rests upon the authority of the venerable Prelate Pechtelm, (whoever that personage may have been,) from whom Bede received it. It is of a certain chief in the

* Bede, l. v. c. xiii. p. 127.

service of King Coenred of Mercia, a man of business as well as distinguished valour, and for that reason high in the King's favour, but whom Coenred never could induce to confess and amend his life, that being an affair which he always put off till a more convenient season. At length he was seized with a violent and excruciating disease: the King renewed his religious exhortations more pressingly; but he whose spirit had been steeled by a soldier's habits, made answer with a haughty courage, he would not confess his sins till he should have recovered from this malady, for that his companions should never have to say that he had done that in the fear of death, which in his health and strength he had alway refused to do. Upon Coenred's next visit, as soon as he came into the room, the sick man, who by that time had undergone a woeful change, cried out to him in despair, "Why are you come hither? It is not now in your power to give me any help or comfort!" And he told him that two beautiful youths, in white garments, had entered the chamber a little before, and seated themselves one at his head, the other at his feet. One of them produced a book, very handsome in its appearance, but of the smallest size, and gave it him to read. There was written in it every good

action which in the course of his life he had performed! they were few in number and little in worth; and when he had inspected the sorry account, they took it from him in silence. Forthwith a whole host of malignant spirits approached the house, and surrounded it, and filled it. The one among them who, by seating himself in the highest place, and by the pre-eminent darkness of his visage, appeared to be the principal Devil of the crew, brought forth, as the good Angels had done, a book; but it was of the ugliest exterior, and of enormous size and weight; and he bade one of the inferior fiends carry it to the dying man that he might look into his account. There he beheld all the evil which he had ever committed in thought, word, or deed, faithfully registered, in letters hideous enough to accord with the outside of that dreadful volume. The chief Devil then said to the two youths in white, Wherefore do ye tarry here, seeing this man is ours? They answered, It is true; take him to fill up the measure of your damnation! With that they disappeared; and two of the most malicious fiends, approaching him with pitchforks in their hands, struck him, one on the head, the other on the feet: it seems they entered at the wounds which they made; for the miserable man ended

his tale thus, "and now with great torments they are creeping through my inward parts; and as soon as they meet in me, I shall die, and be carried by these Devils into Hell." After this recital he died presently, and now, says Bede, performs to all eternity that penitence without avail, a little of which would have secured his pardon if it had been performed in time. He then proceeds to expound the allegorical part of a story which savours much more of invention than of delirium, but which he relates as a real occurrence, and seems to have believed.

Bede has one other tale of a similar kind:* he knew the subject, but conceals his name, and wishes he had not known him. This was a brother in a certain noble monastery in Bernicia, who exercised the useful office of smith, and past more of his time day and night in the workshop, than in praying and singing in the church. This was one heavy sin; for there is a saying, says Bede, that he who will not of his own accord enter the doors of the church for humiliation, shall by force be thrust within the gates of hell for damnation. To this he added drunkenness and other offences. Fall-

* L. v. c. 14. p. 130.

ing at last into a wasting disease, when he was near death he called the monks, and assured them that he had seen hell open, and Satan plunged in its depth, and Caïaphas, with the others who had assisted in putting our Lord to death, near him; and that with them his own place of torment was allotted. In this belief the poor wretch died,

"Unhousell'd, disappointed, unaneal'd,"

for he addressed himself to men whose hearts and understandings were deadened by superstition. They buried him in the outskirts of their ground, as one upon whose remains any respect would have been misbestowed; and no one ventured to perform a mass, recite a psalm, or offer up a prayer for his soul, believing that it was past all redemption. Bede relates this as an event that had recently occurred, and was widely reported to the great edification of the people; and he repeated it in the hope that it might continue to produce the same good effect.*

Hundreds of such tales as these are to be found in the Romish Ecclesiastical writers, and in the Monkish chroniclers; and they might be paralleled, though not equalled in number,

* L. v. c. xv. p. 132.

from the Bibliotheca Fanatica of other sects. A rich assortment might be selected from the Journals of our modern enthusiasts. Did you ever, Sir, meet with "The Divine Visions of Hans Engelbrecht, a Lutheran Protestant, whom God sent from the Dead to be a Preacher of Repentance and Faith to the Christian World"?* He not only went to the place of torments, like Drithelm, and smelt the stink of the infernal pit, but brought some of the stink back with him, to convince† his friends that

* "Translated from the original German, by Francis Okeley, formerly of St. John's College, Cambridge." Northampton, 1780.

† "This was a sign of my having been before Hell. God made the people who were with me to smell such a diabolical, horrible, and infernal stench, whilst I was getting out of bed, which was so immeasurably bad, and such a dreadful stench, that no other stench they could think of in all the world was comparable to it; and I thereupon said, by this are you to conclude infallibly that I have been before Hell. God makes you to smell this diabolical and infernal stench, that it may be a certificate or testimony to you. And a testimony it indeed is, that I have actually been before Hell."—Vol. i. p. 71.

Had poor Engelbrecht been an Arab instead of a German, and produced this *à posteriori* proof of his vision among his own countrymen, he must have fled his country, without any hope of returning to it. There is a whimsical example in the Mémoires du Chevalier D'Arvieux. (t. iii. p. 202.) St. Salvius, Bishop of Albi, when he, like Drithelm, was restored to life, brought back a more savoury testimony,... but it was only per-

he had been there. A *Liber Conformitatum*, not less curious than the ever-memorable work of F. Bartolomeo de Pisa, might be formed by comparing the visions of the Romish Saints with those of the various sectarian enthusiasts; for as these latter have in their extravagancies departed from the standard of the Reformation, they have all, in some respect or other, drawn nearer in spirit and in practice to the Romish Church. Nor is this similarity confined to the Quietists and the Pietists, and the Mystics of both Churches. The mystifications of Jacob

ceptible to himself. He retained an abiding sense of the delicious odours with which he had been regaled, and it supported him for three days without food: but as soon as he related his adventures, it departed from him: *capit iterum Sanctus Dei cum lachrimis dicere, "Væ mihi, quia tale mysterium ausus sum revelare! Ecce enim odor suavitatis quem de loco sancto hausseram, et in quo per hoc triduum sine ullo cibo potuque sustentatus sum, recessit à me! Sed et lingua mea gravibus est operta vulneribus, et ita tumefacta, ut omne os meum videatur implere. Et scio quia non fuit beneplacitum Domino Deo meo ut hæc arcana vulgarentur. Sed tu nosti, Domine, quia in simplicitate cordis hæc feci, non in jactantiâ mentis. Sed quæso indulgeas, et non me derelinquas juxtâ pollicitationem tuam." Et hæc dicens siluit, et accepit cibum potumque.*—Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. l. vii. § 1. p. 375. ed. 1561.

Gregory expresses his apprehension that this story will not be believed, but calls God to witness that he heard it from Salvius himself.

Behmen, the dreams of this Hans Engelbrecht, and the reveries of Swedenborg, are of the same class, and entitled to just as much respect as the revelations of St. Hildegard, St. Gertrude, and St. Bridget of Sweden, though the latter received the solemn sanction of that Council which condemned John Hus and our Jerome to the flames. They are manifestations of the same disease, which is a mixed affection of the body and of the mind, frequently combining more or less with deceit, and always heightened in proportion to the attention which the pretendant, whether knave or fanatic, obtains.

Many of the cases recorded in your hagiologies (and most solemnly sanctioned by Censors of the Press, Inquisitors, and Popes) are instances of clear fraud, and that too of the most impious kind. But these were generally connected with the interests of some monastic order, or with some political purpose: and corrupt as the Church was in Bede's day, it was very far from having attained to the height of its corruptions. The triumphant age of blasphemous imposture had not yet arrived; and the miracles of the class we are at present considering, which have been adduced from Bede, admit in every instance of a natural and easy explanation. Those which are real are

the dreams of persons in various stages of disease or delirium.

Whoever has paid any attention to the operations of the mind during sleep, must be aware how greatly they are modified by our individual characters and pursuits. An excellent friend of ours once showed me the translation of a register which Tippoo Saib kept of his dreams. The original was found among his papers at the capture of Seringapatam. His life, station, and opinions were not more dissimilar to yours or mine, than the workings of his brain in sleep. They were truly Sultanic, as well as Oriental and Mahommedan. He dreamt of battles and victories, of white elephants being sent him by tributary monarchs, and of exterminating the English Infidels: and to an anticipation of this kind he was accustomed to add, "by the blessing of God this dream shall be accomplished." The language was as royal as the conceptions: he could not speak of himself as a mere man: "I my Majesty," was the form of speech which he used. It is not improbable, Sir, that you may have seen the same very curious manuscript, which, if I remember rightly, was translated by a gentleman remarkable for his own imaginations not less than for his eastern learning. But just as Tippoo's dreams ran in the

same course with his hopes and fears, and were formed of the same materials as his daily thoughts and passions, so is it with all of us. The school-boy dreams of his sports and his tasks, of home when he is at school, of school during the holidays. The dog hunts in his sleep, the merchant speculates, the lawyer pleads; and the monk, who preaches of Purgatory, begs for it, acts as broker for the souls there, lives by it, and honestly believes in it, he dreams as naturally of Angels with white wings and shining garments, and Devils with fire in their eyes and nostrils, stings in their tails, and pitchforks in their hands, as you and I, Sir, of the companions of our youth, and the dear countenances which our waking eyes can never again behold, till we meet them in bliss.

This must be pre-eminently the case when the mind is strongly agitated, or deeply impressed; and most of all when it is in a state of suffering,...the worst of all sufferings being the expectation of some great evil which is not to be averted.

> Thou hast been called, O Sleep! the friend of woe;
> But 'tis the happy who have called thee so.

Superadd superstition or fanaticism to such a state of mind, and nothing miraculous need be

supposed for explaining all such dreams and such delirious conceptions as those of Drithelm, and the Smith of the Convent, which are the only ones in Bede that rest upon any tolerable authority, or have any semblance of truth.

If, Sir, you have ever, like Tippoo Sultan, attempted to write down any of your own dreams, which, from their strangeness, may have seemed worthy of such notice, you will have found how difficult it is to prevent the reasonable faculty from disturbing the process of recollection and interfering to arrange these disorderly combinations; and you may have detected yourself in unconsciously modifying some circumstances, and supplying others, till the whole assumes something of shape and coherence; as the painter sometimes, in sportive exertion of skill, works upon a daubed canvass, till the colours which have been laid on without design, are wrought into a fantastic composition. All such visions as that of Drithelm have undergone this process; waking fancies are blended with indistinct remembrances; method and meaning are imperceptibly given to what was confused and vague; and the relator at length imposes upon himself as well as others. You must find better proof, Sir, for your boasted succession in these ages, than either the dor-

mitive or the curative miracles in Bede will afford you.

You will say that there is as little proof in them of imposture as of miracle,..only of great credulity common both to priests and people; and you may perhaps argue that they evince a general belief in supernatural manifestations of divine power, which is in itself evidence that such manifestations were vouchsafed. I am not inclined to undervalue the latter argument; but it proves too much. It would require our assent to the popular belief in witchcraft; and to those travellers, (neither few in number nor light in authority,) who repeat unaccountable tales of Indian, or African, or Eastern priests, and account for them in full faith by spiritual agency. It is granting all that can legitimately be deduced, when we admit that many things, which are at this time explicable by natural and known causes, must then have appeared unquestionably miraculous. But the frauds to which this general credulity gave occasion, and which were practised upon it not merely by individual knaves for their own exclusive ends, but systematically by Religious communities for the benefit of their order, and of the Papal Church, are so numerous, so flagrant, and so notorious, that I should hope, Sir, even to con-

vince you by the examples which will be alleged, ...if it were not almost miraculous to convince any man against his will.

The third class of Romish miracles consists of those in which artifice is apparent. The examples which we find in Bede are within the limits of what a well-intentioned man in those days might believe to be pious fraud. Circumstances produced by natural means were so contrived, or so represented, as to pass with the people for miraculous, and thereby impress the public mind in favour of the clergy. John, Bishop of Hagulstad, (afterwards the famous St. John of Beverley,) taught a dumb youth to speak, and, by the help of a physician, or, as the legend will have it,* the physician by help of John's prayers, cured him of a cutaneous disease in the head. There are sufficient marks of collusion in this case. The patient was for some time previous lodged by the Bishop; he was publicly produced on a Sunday; the Prelate bade him put out his tongue, then made the sign of the cross upon it, and telling him first to pronounce yea, yea, made him go through the alphabet letter by letter; he proceeded next to syllables and sentences, and the apt pupil

* Bede, l. v. c. ii. p. 118.

went on talking for the rest of the day, expressing his thoughts and wishes, which, according to the story, he had never before been able to do.

This miracle requires no comment. The following perhaps may. A priest, by name Utta, went from Northumberland to bring back Edwin's daughter Eanfleda from Kent, in order to her marriage with Oswin. St. Aidan told him he would be in danger at sea, and gave him holy oil with which to still the waves in case of emergency. Accordingly, when the sailors had cast anchor during a storm, and the waves were breaking over the ship, the oil was remembered, and the desired effect was produced.* This, Sir, is not an unfrequent miracle; and for a miracle it probably past with many of those who practised it, and with all who believed the relation, till Franklin made his well known experiment upon yonder beautiful lake which I behold when I lift my eyes toward the window. But this effect of oil upon the water was known to the antients,† and divers used it

* L. iii, c. xv. p. 65.

† "*Hieme mare calidius esse, autumno salsius. Omne olco tranquillari. Et ob id urinantes ore spargere; quoniam miliget naturam asperam lucemque deportet.*" Plin. Nat. Hist. l. ii, § 106.

for that reason. In the Western Islands it was the practice in rough weather to tie a bag filled with sea-fowls' fat behind the rudder of the boat, because it stilled the waves and prevented them from breaking.* We learn from Erasmus that, while in the hope of averting the danger of shipwreck, Saints were invocated and offerings and pilgrimages vowed, the use of oil was one of the human means†, to which sailors in his days resorted in this extremity. Is it unreasonable, then, to surmise that St. Aidan relied more upon his knowledge of the physical fact, than upon a belief that any supernatural virtue was imparted to oil by the ceremony of blessing it? And whereas it is related of the same

* Martin's Description of the Western Islands. Pinkerton's Collection, vol. iii. p. 590.

† *Nonnulli procumbentes in tabulas adorabant mare, quidquid erat olei effundentes in undas, non aliter illi blandientes, quam solemus irato principi.* An. *Quid ajebant?* Ad. *O clementissimum mare, O formosissimum mare: mitesce, serva: hujusmodi multa occinebant surdo mari.* An. *Ridicula superstitio.*—Naufragium.

Evidently there was no faith here in the *holiness* of the oil. Rabus, in his note upon this passage, says, *Forte fidem habuerunt Plinio, qui ita inquit,* l. ii. cap. 103, ea natura est olei, ut lucem adferat ac tranquillet omnia: etiam mare, quo non aliud elementum implacabilius. *Sed credat hoc Judæus Apellà, non ego.* Erasmi Colloquia, p. 164. (Roterodami, 1693.)

thaumaturgic personage that, beholding from the Fern Islands the fire which Penda had kindled in the hope of burning Bebbanburh,* he prayed for the preservation of the place, and the flames were driven from the walls by the wind upon the besiegers' camp†, . . is it attributing too much to secondary causes, if I hint a suspicion that the Saint may have been weather-wise? I am not denying the possibility, Sir, of a providential deliverance, nor even calling in question its likelihood. But it is withdrawing our faith from that Providence which is its proper object, thus to interpose a man, and represent him as the instrument in an instance like this, and hold him up on such grounds as a being who is to be regarded with veneration, and invocated as a mediator in our prayers.

Is the tale of Cædmon's inspiration to be placed in this class of miracles, as the device of a man who feared that his own merits would not obtain the notice and favour which he desired and deserved; or may it be received as the real history of a mind suddenly and strangely awakening to a consciousness of its own powers? In whichever way it be interpreted, the

* Now Bamborough. † Bede, l. iii. c. xvi. p. 65.

story is very remarkable; and it has the additional interest of being unquestionably the earliest anecdote in our poetical biography. There were poets among the Anglo-Saxons before Cædmon, as there were heroes before Agamemnon, but none whose name has been preserved, nor of whose writings* any portion is extant. He lived in the seventh century, and in the vicinity of Whitby, then called Streaneshalch, where Oswy, in gratitude for his victory over Penda, had built and endowed a monastery for his kinswoman St. Hilda, devoting his infant daughter there by a vow to perpetual virginity.† Cædmon appears to have resided upon the estate of the monastery, and to have been in the lowest class of freemen. Music and poetry were as much in request among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors in those days as they are now among the most ultra-refined circles.

* Unless the romance of Beowulf be older. But this very curious poem, though, according to Mr. Turner's high authority, it is in pure Anglo-Saxon, seems not to have been composed in this island. Whether it was brought over by some of the first conquerors, or by the Danes in later ages, is a question for the Northern scholars to decide. Its mythology is not that of the later invaders, and Sir Grim Johnson Thorkelin is probably right in asserting that the passages which refer to scriptural history have been interpolated.

† Bede, l. iii. c. xxiv. p. 73.

It was the custom at merry-makings, even those to which Cædmon was admitted as a guest, for the harp to go round, and every person in his turn to sing to it: and it was probably on such occasions that they who possessed the talent of versifying first exhibited their compositions. What the alternative may have been to which the guest who failed in his turn was liable, is not explained; but some there probably was, for Cædmon, when the harp was coming towards him, used to withdraw from the company in time, as one who felt unable to perform what was required. He rose once from supper for this reason, and went to his business, which was to be that night in the stall among the cattle as a guard. There he fancied in his sleep that some one came to him, called him by his name, and asked him to sing; upon which he replied that he could not sing, and had left the feast on that account. Thus far the dream follows so naturally upon the circumstances that it might almost have been expected. The story proceeds to say that the unknown visitor rejoined, "You must however sing to me." "What must I sing?" quoth Cædmon. "Sing," replied the stranger, "the beginning of all things." Upon this he began to

sing off like an improvvisatore upon the theme which had been given; and when he awoke he found himself able not only to recollect eighteen verses* which he had thus composed in sleep, but to proceed with a composition in the highest strain of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Away he went to the farmer or bailiff under whose immediate

* We are beholden to Bede for the story, and to Bede's translator, our incomparable Alfred, for inserting in his translation the original passage, which would otherwise have been lost. The original may be seen in Mr. Turner's Anglo-Saxons, (Book ix. ch. i. vol. iii. p. 302, third edition,) and that author's literal version is here subjoined:—

Now we should praise
The Guardian of the heavenly kingdom:
The mighty Creator
And the thoughts of his mind.
Glorious Father of his works,
As he of every glory
Eternal Lord,
Established the beginning:
So he first shaped
The Earth for the children of men,
And the Heavens for its canopy.
Holy Creator,
The middle region,
The Guardian of mankind,
The Eternal Lord
Afterwards made
The ground for men.
Almighty Ruler!

orders he was serving, and related to him the wonderful adventure of the night. The bailiff led him forthwith to the Abbess, there to repeat his story and his verses, which he did in the presence of as many learned persons as could be collected. They pronounced it an affair of inspiration, and set him another subject from scripture to be versified as a farther proof. This he did so well by the following morning, that St. Hilda advised him to change his lay habit, took him and his whole family* into the convent, and gave orders that he should be instructed in the whole series of the Sacred History.

Cædmon was not taught to read when he entered upon his office as Laureate of the Convent of Streaneshalch. He used to listen to the scriptures, chew† the cud upon what he had heard, dispose his recollections with the thoughts and feelings which they excited in

* *Susceptumque in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorte associavit.*

† *At ipse cuncta quæ audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum,* et quasi mundum animal ruminando, *in carmen dulcissimum convertebat, suaviusque resonando doctores suos vicissim auditores faciebat suos.* The word *ruminate* is become so trivial, that Bede's strong meaning would not have been perceived if I had used it.

verse, and then in his turn delight and edify those by whom he had been instructed. In this manner he versified all the historical parts of the Pentateuch, the entrance of the Israelites into the promised land, sundry other portions of the Old Testament, and most of the Gospel history. He also composed poems upon Doomsday, Heaven, and Hell, and many legends, the direct purport of all being to deter the hearers from sin, and exhort them to a virtuous and religious life. He was not a young man when his inspiration began; and when he had been received into the monastery, he not only observed its discipline strictly himself, but was noted for his zeal against those who neglected it. His death was remarkable and happy. After an illness of fourteen days, which was not supposed to be dangerous by any except himself, he desired that a bed might be made ready for him in that apartment into which patients whose death was at hand, or whose cases were incurable, used to be removed; and this, though it was thought unnecessary, was done. He conversed cheerfully, and even jested with the other inmates of that sad chamber, till it was after midnight, and then asked if the Eucharist was in the room? "What need is there for the Eucharist?" was the answer.

"You who are talking with us merrily, like a sound man, are not about to die." "Bring it me nevertheless," said he. Then taking it in his hand, he asked if there was any one present who had cause of complaint against him, or bore him an ill will? and being answered in the negative, replied to a like demand on their part, that he also was in peace and good will with them and with all men. Fortifying himself then with that viaticum, says Bede, for the entrance into another world, he asked how long it was before Lauds would begin? Not long, they said. Well then, said he, we will wait for that hour; and signing himself with the cross, he laid his head on the pillow, fell asleep, and in that sleep presently expired without a groan.*

Dr. Milner is pleased to say that Mr. Southey is a poet,† and therefore "it is not surprizing if he makes use of his poetical license or faculty in writing history rather than weary himself in hunting out and bringing forward dusty records." Thanking him, as it becomes me to do, for the admission with which this courteous periphrasis is introduced, I must in the present instance plead the license which

* L. iv. c. xxiv. p. 107-9. † Strictures, p. 4.

he is gracious enough to allow, as an excuse for having pursued the story of Cædmon to its close. In no other instance will it be needed.* The digression is a mark of respect due to the father of English poetry; and as such he would be entitled to it, even if he were now nothing more than *nominis umbra*. But if the work which Junius ascribes to him be indeed his, as Mr. Turner (in opposition to Hickes) inclines to think it, and as there is good reason† to sup-

* And whereas the candid and urbane Titular says that the poet ought to be dragged down to the solid ground of authentic documents, (Strictures, p. 5.) he may be assured not only that I have always written from such documents, but that I have *never garbled them, never falsified them, never referred to them as proving opinions the very opposite to those which the writers have maintained.*

† It is not likely that there should have been two Cædmons, both poets of the highest order, and both writing upon the same subject. But it is very probable that a transcriber may have adapted the language of the poem to that of his own age; and the reasons upon which Hickes formed his opinion may thus be satisfactorily explained.

I know the poem only by the very striking passages which Mr. Turner has translated in his History of the Anglo-Saxons. —Vol. iii. pp. 355—364.

The Royal Society of Literature would render a most acceptable service to that literature which it is their object to promote, if they would employ some competent scholar to edite the Saxon poems which yet remain, and accompany them with a literal version.

pose,..in that case, considering the age in which Cædmon lived, no eulogy can exceed his merits, and we need not wonder at the effect which his poems are known to have produced in exciting the youthful mind of Alfred.

Whether the first manifestation of this highly gifted poet's powers is to be classed as an extraordinary fact relating to the developement of the intellect; or as a mere fable, like the inspiration of Hesiod and Hafiz; or with legends like that of St. Martin of Leon, (who, being old, unlearned,* and of slow parts, was made to eat a book in a waking vision, and thereupon found himself the next morning an accom-

* St. Isidore prescribed the book, and Martin objected to it on the ground that he was keeping a fast, and therefore could not eat it with a safe conscience. And though St. Isidore assured him that he need not have any scruple upon that score, and told him who he was, and that he was the patron of that very monastery wherein he then appeared to him, and moreover that the Lord had sent him on that errand, Martin hesitated so long that the Saint became impatient, took him by the beard, opened his mouth, and forced the volume down his throat.

The reader who wishes to compare this statement with those *authentic documents* which it is insinuated I am not in the habit of consulting, may find the history of the blessed Martin in the Acta SS. Feb. t. ii. p. 568. He may also find the fact of eating the book, and digesting its contents, stated as an *insigne milagro* by Ambrosio Morales in his very learned and able History, lib. xii. c. 22. § 21. (t. vi. p. 136. ed. 1791.) And he

plished Latin scholar, and an excellent divine,) as a legend it was reported and believed, as

may read here the passage in the original from which the life in the Acta is translated: which original also happens to be in my possession:—

"*Carecia de letras, y particularmente de las necessarias para el conocimiento y intelligencia de la sagrada escriptura. Era estrañó el desseo que toda la vida avia tenido de alcanzarlo. Tratavalo en la oracion con el Rey del Cielo, suplicandole con mucha ansia y fervor le concediesse este beneficio y merced tan pretendida. Ponia por intercessor y medianero al glorioso doctor, padre y patron de aquel monasterio, y suyo, Sant Isidro. Haziendo todas estas diligencias, buscando estos favores, y acudiendo a todos estos medios, acudia tambien al de su cuydado y trabajo. Mas faltavale ingenio, y maestro, que son las alas con que se alcanzan semejantes pretensiones. No echo Dios en olvido, la pia peticion de su siervo, ni quiso que diligencia y medios enderezados para tam buen fin, diessen en vazio. Assi siendo ya viejo, como estuviesse Martin una noche en oracion, segun tenia de costumbre, pidiendo con grande encarecimiento esta merced, le aparecio el glorioso Sant Isidro, con un libro en la mano, y le dixo, 'toma, Martin, este libro, y comelo; que con el te embia el Señor intelligencia de la escritura sagrada!' Escusavasse el sancto varon de comerlo, diziendo que ayunava, y que no podia quebrar este precepto. 'Bien puedes comerlo (le dixo el glorioso Sant Isidro) sin temor de que te prive del merito del ayuno. Porque yo soy Isidoro, patron deste lugar, y me embia Dios, a que de su parte te de este recaudo. Estava Martino suspenso, sin saber que hazer. Pero el sancto doctor se llego a el, y asiendolo de la barba, se lo hizo por fuerza tragar, y con esto desaparecio.'*"—Hist. de las Grandezas de la muy antigua e insigne Ciudad y Iglesia de Leon. Por Fr. Athanasio de Lobera. Valladolid, 1596. (ff. 314.)

such it was related by Bede, and upon the authority of that legend Saint Cædmon has a place in the Romish Kalendar.*.

The last class of Romish miracles consists of those which are either palpable frauds, or not less palpable fictions; and the example which I am about to adduce belongs as decidedly to this order as the "Vision related to have been seen by Laurentius." Imma, a person of some rank in the Northumbrian court, having been left for dead upon the field in a battle near the river Trent between the Northumbrians and

* February 11, is his day; and his history, as taken from Bede, is in the second volume of the Acta Sanctorum for that month, p. 552, where there is a reference to Harpsfield (of historical and burning notoriety), and to Hieronimus Porter, for an account of his relics. One of the notes contains a remarkable instance of disingenuousness in Bolland, to use no harsher expression. Bede having said of the poet *ut quidquid ex divinis litteris per interpretes disceret, hoc ipse post pusillum verbis poeticis maximâ suavitate et compunctione compositis, in suâ, id est Anglorum linguâ, proferret*, Bolland remarks, "*non enim vernaculâ divini libri extabant*," and then proceeding with a memorable extract from Knighton, in which Wicliffe is reprobated for translating the scriptures into the vulgar, and thus throwing the gospel pearls before swine, he says that Wicliffe was the first person who did this. It is true that in Cædmon's time no part of the scriptures had been rendered into Anglo-Saxon, but Bolland knew that Bede at the very hour of his death was employed in translating St. John's Gospel.

Mercians, was taken prisoner when endeavouring to make his way home, and carried before one of the Mercian chiefs. He was afraid to acknowledge his quality, lest he should be put to death, and therefore said that he was a poor married peasant, who happened to be with the army, because he had been employed with others in carrying provisions to it. Upon this his wounds were drest, and he was well used, except that, when he was almost healed, the precaution was taken of putting him in chains at night to prevent him from making his escape. But no sooner every night were the men departed who had thus, as they supposed, secured him, than the irons fell off. For he had a brother, Tunna by name, Abbot of a monastery in the town which, after his name, was called Tunnacester: this Abbot, hearing that Imma had been slain, went to search the field for his body; he found one so like as to be mistaken for that which he was seeking, carried it to the monastery, interred it with due honours, and caused frequent masses to be performed for his soul; and it was by virtue of these masses that the chains were loosened. Extraordinary as the effect may appear, Imma himself apprehended the cause; and when the chief whose prisoner he was

asked him whether he had a written spell* about his person by reason of which it was impossible to hold him in bonds, he replied that he knew nothing of such arts, but that he had a brother who, he doubted not, caused masses to be said for him, believing him to have been slain; and if he had been dead, his soul, sans doubt, would through this intercession have been absolved from all pain, as his body was now freed from fetters. This, however, did not procure his enlargement, and the miracle went no farther. After a while his keepers began, by his countenance and manners and discourse, to suspect his rank, and the chief questioned him concerning it, promising that he should not be treated worse for acknowledging the truth. Upon this Imma confessed that he was one of the King's servants. I knew by thy speech, replied the Mercian, that thou wast no peasant. And now thou deservest to die, because all my brothers and kinsmen were slain in that battle; nevertheless, because of my promise I will not put thee to death. So he sold him to a certain Frison in London; there the same wonder regularly occurred, till his new owner allowed him to

* *Literas solutorias, de quibus fabulæ ferunt,*... perhaps a Runic charm is meant.

depart, after exacting from him an oath that he would either send his ransom or return to captivity. Imma went into Kent, and had interest enough there with King Lodhere to obtain from him the money. After a while he returned into his own country, and upon comparing dates with his brother the Abbot, they ascertained that his chains had generally fallen off precisely at the hours when mass was celebrated for him: and moreover that the other conveniences and good fortune which he had enjoyed while a prisoner, were owing to the same cause, and to the efficacy of his brother's prayers. Very many persons hearing this marvellous relation were induced to make oblations and bespeak masses for their deceased friends, when they were thus assured that the salutary effect of such means availed for the redemption of the body as well as the soul. And Bede, having received the story from several witnesses who heard it from Imma himself, recorded it as a fact which was not to be doubted, and which moreover was of such importance to the general good, that he deemed it his duty to insert it in his history.*....Would you desire, Sir, a prettier sample of priestcraft and imposture than

* L. iv. c. xxii. p. 103—5.

this scheme for bringing custom to the mass-mongers at Tunnacester?

I have confined myself to Bede, Sir, in these examples, because you have appealed to his authority for the succession of miracles in the Anglo-Saxon times. It appears that not a single miracle of the many which he has recorded rests upon his own testimony; but that stories of this description reached him from all parts, and were sent him by ecclesiastical persons high in station, of whom, if many were as credulous as himself, some at least were not so scrupulous. There is not one fact in his works upon which you can rely with the slightest show of reason to prove your position; there are many in proof of mine...that the clergy practised upon the easy faith of an ignorant people. This it is which was affirmed in the Book of the Church, neither lightly nor injuriously, nor with any intention of detracting from the virtues of men whose eminent worth was fully acknowledged at the same time, and who were spoken of with the admiration and gratitude to which, all circumstances considered, they are well entitled. If you had not resented this as a calumnious imputation, and called for proofs, as if you were so little conversant with the history of that age as really to

suppose there were none which could be adduced, I should not have undertaken what many readers may deem an unnecessary task. Such inquiries, however, are never uninteresting, and seldom unrewarded. They are digressions from the beaten track of history, and, like deviations from a high road, lead us into retired scenes which are frequently more characteristic and more pleasing than are beheld by the straightforward traveller.

> Nor rough nor barren are the winding ways
> Of hoar antiquity, but strewn with flowers.

Often in the course of such researches have I remembered these lines of my predecessor Warton, to whom, in my youthful days, I have been so deeply indebted for instruction and delight.

LETTER V.

CONVERSION OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS.

Upon the conversion of the Danes, Sir, and the other northern nations, your remarks are brief, and my comments upon them will not be longer. There is only one observation of yours which requires notice. After thanking me, where no thanks are due, for acknowledging the good effected in those ages by the clergy, and especially by the Benedictines, (which I had done as faithfully and far more fully than I had noted their errors or their corruptions,) you entreat me to keep in mind that the conversion which I describe to have been attended with so many spiritual and so many temporal blessings, were conversions effected by Roman Catholic missionaries to the Roman Catholic faith. And you add,* "Can such a faith deserve a harsh word?"

What, Sir, if in reply to this appeal, I should

* Page 56.

entreat you to bear in mind that the persecution of the Albigenses in earlier, and of the Vaudois in later times, the autos-da-fe of Queen Mary's accursed reign, and the acts of the Inquisition, were acts of the Roman Catholic clergy, performed for the sake and in the name of the Roman Catholic faith; and then to say, Can such a faith deserve a good word? I propound the question only to show you the inconsequence of yours. We must look at the good as well as the evil, and the evil as well as the good. And were your mind, Sir, but as free to perceive and confess the misdeeds of the Papal Church, as mine is to feel and acknowledge the benefits which humanity during some ages derived from it, there would be little difference between us. The film would then fall from your eyes, and you would see things as they have been, and as they are.

LETTER VI.

THE BRITISH AND ANGLO-SAXON CHURCHES.

In this letter, Sir, I shall reply to the objections which you and your fellow-labourer the Titular Bishop Milner have advanced against certain positions in the Book of the Church relating to the British and Anglo-Saxon times, and in my turn offer a few remarks upon some of the assertions which you have both hazarded.

First, with regard to the British Christians. You ask* whether the slightest evidence can be produced that they possessed a purer faith than was introduced by the Anglo-Saxon missionaries? You maintain that the only difference between them and St. Augustine related to the computation of Easter, (a matter wherein no point of doctrine was implicated,) and you argue that their refusal to acknowledge his authority was merely asserting the indepen-

* Page 53.

dence of their church upon an intermediate prelate.

It appears* that, upon this portion of our history, you have consulted the *Annales Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, by Father Alford,† and the scarce but noted Treatise of Father Persons, concern-

* Page 22.

† Michael Alford, alias Griffith, was a person of good family, born in 1585, either in London or somewhere in Surry. In the eleventh year of his age he was placed in the seminary at St. Omers. At twenty-two he professed among the Jesuits, and having taken the fourth and peculiar vow of that order (of special obedience to the Pope, to go upon whatever mission he may send them), and been twice at Rome on the affairs of the Company, he passed thirty years as a missionary in England, during which time he was employed, more harmlessly than most of his colleagues, in compiling these Annals. At the end of the second volume are these verses *ad Lectorem*:—

Scire cupis, Lector, quo tempore, quâ de causâ,
Incultâ prostant hæc mea scripta manu?
Hos ego Depinxi Libros qvando Anglia bello
Civili cvnctos terrvit; et latvi.

The author returned to St. Omers for the purpose of printing this work, which purpose death prevented him from accomplishing. He died there in 1653, and the work was published at Liege ten years afterwards, chiefly, as it appears, at the cost of Lady Smith, mother to Viscount Carington.

What sort of book this is may be judged by the title—*Fides Regia, Britannica, Saxonica, Anglica, Una illa, eademque Sancta, Catholica Romana. Fides Regia* he had resolved to call it, because Christianity had been so eminently promoted by the

ing the Three Conversions of England. Both works are in my possession. That both were written by Jesuits will not be considered as

Saxon Kings. But afterwards he was of opinion that a divinet* impulse had led him to chuse that epigraph, when he saw the mutability of the Protestant faith, and perceived it *à vulgo hominum et imperitâ plebe, nec aliunde uniformiter deformiter descendere. Unde cusa Fides in illâ officinâ, propriè dici debet † Plebœa Fides cum Regiâ Fide e diametro pugnans.* He dedicated his book to the Trinity, and the frontispiece is worthy of the title and the dedication, ... the editor, following, as he says, the intention of the author, having prefixed to the work the representation of the patron whom F. Alford had chosen! *Occupat ergo, absque minimâ erroris suspicione,* DEI TRINI ET UNIUS *imago frontem libri.* DEIPARA *inter Divinas Personas coronanda conspicitur,* ... while a select company of personages, more or less connected with the ecclesiastical history of England, are assembled round the Cross, some of them looking up to behold the Mighty Mother receive her crown from the hands of the Father and the Son, the Spirit hovering over her. Certain Popes and Saints are in the group, with the Empress Helena, Constantius, King Lucius, and King William the Conqueror. The editor informs us that, if there had been room, the *omnigenus numerus* of English Saints ought to have been included, specifying among them St. Ursula, probably as the representative of her Eleven Thousand Companions: ... and had this ingenious editor possessed a spirit of prophecy, or of second sight, doubtless, between that illustrious

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* *Divinior tamen impetus traxit me, opinor, ad illam Epigraphem.*

† The printer has made nonsense of this passage by printing the word *Phebæa.*

any recommendation by those who know what are the principles of Jesuitism, and what has been its constant practice. If a Papist dare not comment upon Newton without declaring his submission* to the papal decrees against the motion of the earth, what degree of freedom or of sincerity can be looked for from an English Jesuit writing upon the Ecclesiastical History of England? Alford is one of those compilers who, setting out upon a system of opinions, are resolved to serve that system by fair means or by foul throughout their compilations, and thus forfeit the only credit to which a mere compiler can be entitled, that of fidelity. He has all the disingenuousness† which charac-

Virgin Saint and the not less illustrious Virgin St. Winifred, he would have placed the meek Milner, dividing his affections between them, like the Count between his two wives in Goethe's tragedy.

* See Mr. Blanco White's Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism, (p. 149) a book that must convince every understanding and affect every heart which bigotry and superstition have not rendered impenetrable.

† It is edifying to observe how such a writer speaks of Usher: "*Jacobus Usserius, Armachanus nuncupatus Episcopus—librum inscripsit* Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates; sive de Britannicarum rerum primordiis: *in quo multa magno labore industriâque congerit, quæ primorum sæculorum Fidem illustrent: quæ tamen ipse non eo fine, sed obiter tantum, et pro Ecclesiarum*

terizes his order, with as small a portion of its ability as has fallen to the lot of any man whom it permitted to appear as an author. So much for Father Alford!* For the other Jesuit, Father Persons, were I to speak of him and his Three Conversions as the man and the book deserve, it would be necessary to borrow a few phrases from the vocabulary of Dr. Milner, . . .

antiquitatis assertione profert: ideoque ita profert aliquando, ut fidem pro re natâ vel accommodet, vel suspendat, vel omnino elevet: adeo intellectus noster, qui affectum ducere, lumenque ad electionem præferre deberet, ducitur; et affectu suæ causæ, hoc est cæco plerumque impetu, seducitur atque captivatur."—Præf. § 16.

* This writer makes an appeal to the reader which would be affecting if it were not even ridiculously inconsistent with the very nature of his work: *ego*, he says, *qui omnem juventutem foris egi, et nunc per triginta annos ἀπολις, aquâ, ut dicitur, et igni interdictus, procul à bibliothecarum pluteis, nec ullâ librorum supellectile instructus, impar labori (quis dubitet?) videbar.* (Præf. § 20.) But what says the editor? "*Mirum videri debeat unde quietem, tempus, et imprimis* adeo selectam et copiosam librorum repererit supellectilem; et sane reperisse videtur, *cum vix nominari queat, qui res Ecclesiasticas Angliæ pertractet, quem non revolverit et penitiùs examinârit. Atque ut mens Authorum legentibus pateat, profert semper illorum verba et sententias; quippe non tam suis verbis et ingenio historiam concinnatam, quàm ipsis Authorum verbis illustratam dare voluit: ita ut Lector ob oculos habeat, quod ipse vel approbet, vel improbet; nec ad alia recurrere volumina cogatur, cum hìc, ut affirmare licet, bibliothecam rerum Angliæ Ecclesiasticarum præ manibus teneat.* (Ad Lectorem, §§ 2, 3.)

an author to whom I would not willingly be indebted for any thing more than those "flagrant civilities," which in the course of these letters will be duly acknowledged and repaid.

The legitimate use that may be made of two such authorities is to prove from Alford (if his originals were not accessible) the superstition and the arts of his Church; and from Persons the necessity of the penal laws enacted under Elizabeth against a priesthood which had then openly made a league with persecution, with treason, and with massacre.

Let me, Sir, in return for the many recommendations of this kind wherewith you have favoured me, recommend you to examine the works of Archbishop Parker, Archbishop Usher, and Bishop Stillingfleet, upon the British Church; men of a very different stamp from Persons and Alford; unimpeached* and unimpeachable in character; of the soundest learning and the soundest judgement. Allow me also to point out this remarkable difference between the Romanist and the Protestant writers; that while the former discover little or no acquaintance with the champions of our faith, the latter

* It is in contrast with the character of Persons that this is said: Alford may have been a well-meaning, inoffensive man, and, for a Jesuit, an honest one.

are better read in Roman Catholic history and papal controversialists, than the Romanists themselves are at this day.

But to the point. The difference concerning Easter* was *not* the only one between the British and the Anglo-Saxon Christians. The tonsure, to which so much typical and mystical meaning is attached by the Romanists, was not practised by the Britons, and they objected to it as strongly† as to the Roman computation of Easter. And there were very‡ many other differences, which, whatever they may have been, were sufficient to prevent the Britons§ from holding any more communion with their Romanized neighbours than with heathens. Corruptions undoubtedly there were in the British church, some that were imported, and some perhaps that were of home growth, the natural

* This dispute occasioned some inconvenience in the royal household of Northumbria, for it sometimes happened that while the King was holding his Easter feast, the Queen was observing her Palm-Sunday fast.—Bede, l. iii. c. xxv. p. 75.

† Bede, l. iii. c. xxvi. p. 78.

‡ Aldhelm wrote a treatise *adversus errorem Britonum, quo vel Pascha non suo tempore celebrant, vel* alia perplura *ecclesiasticæ castitati et paci contraria gerunt.*—Bede, l. v. c. xix. p. 134.

§ *Usque hodie moris sit Britonum fidem religionemque Anglorum pro nihilo habere, neque in aliquo eis magis communicare quàm paganis.*—Bede, l. ii. c. x. p. 51.

product of barbarous times; but the newest corruptions, for some were now produced* in every age, had not been introduced before the arrival of Augustine.

It is not less certain that the religion of the Anglo-Saxons, Romanized as it was, differed in many essential points from the Romish religion of later ages, with which the Romanists endeavour in vain to identify it. Dr. Milner, indeed, your colleague in the controversy which

* "During the first three hundred years their Papal Indulgencies were yet unhatched, their Purgatory Fire was yet unkindled, it made not, as afterwards, their pot boyle and their kitchin smoak; the Mass was yet unmoulded, Transubstantiation was yet unbaked, the Treasury of Merits was yet unminted, the Pope's transcendant power was uncreated, Ecclesiastics were unexempted, and deposing of Kings yet undreamed of: the Lay-people were not yet cozened of the Cup, Communion under one kind was not yet in kind, it was not then known that Liturgies and Prayers were usually and publickely made in a tongue unknown; they did not then worship and adore any wooden or breaden God, they *worshipt that which they knew*, and that *in Spirit and Truth*, and they called on him *in whom they believed*; so did they, and so do we."—*Birckbek's Protestant Evidence*, 1635, p. 21.

This passage, which is not the less forcible for its quaintness, is from a work of great research, "shewing that for 1500 years next after Christ, divers worthy Guides of God's Church have in sundry weighty points of religion taught as the Church of England now doth."

you have invited, asserts that "the Poet has taken care* to suppress two facts of the greatest importance in the present case, though acknowledged by Bale, the Centuriators, and other learned Protestants; namely, that the Apostles of our ancestors, these envoys from Pope Gregory, brought along with them from Rome the same Christianity which is professed in it at the present day; namely, the Mass, the Real Presence, the Supremacy of the Pope, Prayers to the Saints and for the Dead, Relicks, Crucifixes and Holy Water. The second fact is, that the Roman missionaries arriving here at the end of the sixth century, found the Britons, or Welsh, who had been converted in the second century professing the self-same religion with themselves."

At present I have no opportunity of consulting Bale and the Centuriators. But if, upon consulting them, it should prove that they really have made any such acknowledgement, I confess that, on two accounts, I shall be greatly surprized. It would surprize me much to find that they could have been, not so mistaken in historical facts, but so completely ignorant of them; and it would surprize me still more to discover

* Page 5.

that Dr. Milner, who deals so largely and so boldly in round assertions, should for once be borne out by the authorities to which he refers.

The first of these pretended facts has been disposed of upon sufficient proof; and there is even fuller proof against the second, because it relates to an age concerning which there is no want of documents. A single sentence may comprize all that need here be said. Reminding you, Sir, (for it cannot be necessary to *inform* you upon these points,) that in the Anglo-Saxon times there was no attempt to withhold the Scriptures from the people in their own tongue; that the doctrine of the Pope's temporal authority had not been broached, and that he himself disclaimed the spiritual supremacy which was arrogated by his successors; that communion was administered in both kinds; and that Transubstantiation had been then so little dreamt of, that both you yourself and Dr. Milner cautiously in this place avoid the word, and speak of the Real Presence, as if the terms were tantamount, (an artifice too palpable to pass without animadversion,) .. I refer you to Bishop Stillingfleet for a parallel between the doctrines taught by Gregory's missionaries, and those established at the Council of Trent, whereby

the Romanists are at this day bound; or to the extracts from Stillingfleet in the volume addressed to yourself, Sir, by Mr. George Townsend, a gentleman whose work will render it unnecessary for me to enlarge upon those branches of our subject which he has so ably and convincingly treated.

You charge me with sins of omission because some pages in the Book of the Church have not been bestowed "on the edifying holiness of St. Neot; the monastic sanctity and extensive learning of Bredfirth, the monk of Ramsay; the extensive learning of Bede, and the royal virtues and piety of Alfred." "On themes like these," you exclaim, "how much did justice call on you to dwell! But how little do you say upon them!"*. And you press this on my consideration as an important remark. A little consideration on your own part might have shown you that, unless the scale of my work had been greatly extended, there could be no room for entering upon the merits of such persons as St. Neot† and the monk of Ramsay.‡ With

* P. 71.

† The last work of Whitaker, the hypothetical historian of Manchester, was "the Life of St. Neot, the Oldest of all the Brothers to King Alfred." It is, like his other works, laborious, minute, inductive, positive—and inconclusive. When

regard to Bede, it sufficed to mention him as he was there mentioned; and perhaps, Sir, you may now be inclined to wish that I had past over his life and writings as cursorily in these Letters as in the work which you have called upon me to vindicate and substantiate. I did not enlarge upon "the royal virtues and piety of Alfred," because the theme was altogether irrelevant. Thus much for the specific points

the reader comes to the end he wonders how so much erudition and ability and vigour of mind can have been employed to so little purpose. One singular mistake occurs in this volume. (p. 194.) In a game law of 33 Henry VIII. he finds the inhabitants of certain places allowed to use their guns, "so that it be at no manner of deer, heron, shovelard, pheasant, partridge, wild-swine, or *wild-elk*, or any of them;" and this he adduces as incontestable evidence that "that astonishing animal, the morse deer, or elk, roamed in our woods very late—even so late —*could we think it?* as the sixteenth century"—that it "existed among us, and was universally known to exist, even within a COUPLE OF CENTURIES FROM OUR OWN TIMES." It would have surprized him to have been told that the wild-elk of Henry VIII.'s law exists among us still, being, in fact, nothing more than the wild swan.

‡ If this monk was, as Mabillon conjectures him to have been, (Lingard's Antiq. of the Ang. Sax. Church, n. p. 395.) the coeval biographer of St. Dunstan, whose work is printed in the Acta Sanctorum, he would deserve notice for something very different from sanctity, though it entered largely into the character of many a monkish saint.

of omission for which you have arraigned me; the general charge is once more repelled as confidently as it has been made. My declared purport was not only to expose "the errors and crimes of the Romish church," but also to show "in what manner the best interests of the country were advanced by the clergy even during the darkest ages of papal* domination;" and this was done in the Book of the Church, not faintly and insidiously, but fairly and fully, with the sincerity of one who knows the strength of his argument, and leaves the tricks of disingenuousness to those who may be weak enough in themselves, or in their cause, to need them.

This imputation is followed by a charge which must not be dismissed so lightly. You notice as a great but unintentional misrepresentation that I have praised "the primate Theodore for prohibiting divorce for any other cause than that which is allowed by the Gospel."† The courtesy with which this is expressed is your own; the remark appears to have been adopted from your coadjutor the Titular Bishop Milner, who, *pro singulari humanitate sua*, says, in this place, that I have "*falsified*‡ a synodical decree

* Vol. i. p. 2.

† P. 71.

‡ Merlin's Strictures, p. 7.

in order to decide an important controversy between (Roman) Catholics and Protestants." "It is false then," he says, "that Theodore, or rather the council of Herudford, over which he presided, mentioned, or so much as alluded to, the unlawful practice of divorce."

That you would not follow this ill-mannered*

* Bishop of Castabala I had called him, till I learnt from his present pamphlet that he had been translated to the see of Billingsgate.

This Vicar Apostolic has written under the name of John Merlin, for what other reason than his liking for an anagram I have not been able to discover, unless it be that *John Merlin* might (in large letters, p. 64.) advise his readers "*to consult the unanswerable* LETTERS TO A PREBENDARY, AND THE END OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY, by *Dr. Milner;*"—wherein he asserts himself to have proved—some of the rankest falsehoods that ever proceeded from the Jesuits manufactory of slander.

There have been three eminent persons of the name of Merlin. Merlin Sylvester (or Merddin Wyllt as the Welsh call him) was the first. He was a poet, a prophet, and a madman; the Titular is neither. The second is the Merlin of Spenser and the Round Table Romances, the well-known enchanter. Dr. Milner works no miracles himself; he only testifies to those of St. Winifred; and believes in those of St. Dunstan and Co. This Merlin, moreover, though the son of the Devil, was, as his biographer assures us, "a gentleman on the mother's side;" now the Titular writes as if he were without a drop of gentle blood in his veins. Mr. Berington indeed observed long ago that he had no aristocracy in his manners.

man in his language was to be expected, Sir, from your habitual urbanity; a disposition which will always prevent you from thus exciting the scorn of your antagonists and the sorrow of your friends; and perhaps you have only repeated his remark for the sake of silently re-

The third and last Merlin was the ingenious mechanist well known in his day, who, had he lived in the proper age and been lay-brother in a convent, with this worthy defender of St. Dunstan for Abbot, might have enriched the fraternity by making images weep, sweat, speak, lift their hands and roll their eyes, more than he enriched himself by the amusing exhibition, which I remember some four-and-thirty years ago in London.

To neither of these Merlins can I trace any resemblance; but there is a fourth to whom some similitude may be recognized, as he figures, not in the French Revolution, but in an epigram as rememberable as a good Welsh triad.

Connoissez-vous rien de plus sot,
Que Merlin, Bazire et Chabot?
Non, je ne connois rien de pire
Que Merlin, Chabot et Bazire;
Et personne n'est plus coquin
Que Chabot, Bazire et Merlin.

Both the spirit and the temper of this person's writings are worthy of Bishop Bonner; but I believe that Bonner himself would have had more decency than to have written one of the notes in the thoroughly malignant and scurrilous publication which has provoked this notice;—a publication, be it remembered, for which the British Roman Catholic Association voted their thanks in a body to its author! *Bene nobiscum agitur quod latrare, non etiam mordere, possunt.*

proving him, by showing that the objection derives none of its force from the insolent terms in which he has advanced it. But how is it that you have relied upon this faithless writer so blindly as to adopt the paltry quibble which he has had the effrontery to bring forward?... The Council of Herudford* has not mentioned divorce! This is reversing the usual form of brother Peter's sophistry; what that brother could not find in his father's will *totidem verbis*, he was accustomed to look for *totidem literis*, and accordingly spelt out in it whatever he wished it to contain. But here it seems the word *divorce* has not been used, and therefore the thing itself cannot have been intended! The argument reminds me of a most reprehensible artifice practised by the Socinians not many years ago, and reported as worthy of imitation in one of those journals which are open for every thing that is mischievous. They offered a reward to a set of school-boys for any

* The Herudford of Bede is not Hereford, as Mr. Butler and many other writers have supposed, but Hertford, the Heorte-ford of the Saxon Chronicle, (p. 49. in the late edition of Mr. Ingram.) The error is pointed out by Fuller in his Church History, (p. 87.) who seems to think it originated with "judicious and industrious Bishop Godwine," partial to the place whereof he himself was Bishop.

one who should find the word Trinity in the Bible; and this was represented as an ingenious and praiseworthy device for leading the boys to infer that the doctrine is unscriptural! An infidel might just as fairly invite them to look in the same place for the word Christianity, and argue, with equal reason, that Christianity is a fable, because there is no such word either in the Old Testament or the New! If divorce is not the subject-matter of the decree,* will Dr. Milner be pleased to inform us what is?

Had he maintained that there is more in the decree than meets the ear, and that while it professes to allow of one cause alone for divorce, it implies a power in the Church of annulling marriages between persons within the prohibited degrees, the letter might have borne him out, and perhaps the intention also. I am not without suspicion that it was so worded as to convey more meaning than it was thought convenient to express; and that this was done

* *Nulli liceat nisi legitimum habere connubium. Nullus incestum faciat: nullus conjugem propriam, nisi, ut sanctum Evangelium docet, fornicationis causâ, relinquat. Quod si quisquam propriam expulerit conjugem legitimo sibi matrimonio conjunctam, si Christianus esse rectè voluerit, nulli alteri copulctur, sed ita permaneat, aut propriæ concilietur conjugi.*—Bede, l. iv. c. v. p. 89.

with the view of aiding the Romish church in one of its most vexatious and shameless devices for extending its influence and supplying its expenditure. I suspect this because the ecclesiastical laws upon this subject were purposely concealed from the Anglo-Saxons at the time of their conversion.

The marriage of cousin-germans, and consequently of persons in any remoter degree of consanguinity, was allowed in the first ages of the church, as it was by the Roman law, ... Christianity having introduced no restrictions upon this point, nor sanctioned any, beyond those which are indicated by the order of nature, and necessary for the peace of families and the well-being of society. St. Ambrose, however, took up the strange and untenable opinion that the union of first-cousins was prohibited in scripture; and the Emperor Theodosius is supposed to have acted under his advice when he promulgated an atrocious law, by which persons intermarrying under such circumstances were to be burnt, and their property confiscated. Both Saints Augustine and Athanasius delivered it as their judgement that these alliances were not forbidden by any divine law. But the unreasonable doctrine prevailed; and though the edict was mitigated by Honorius in

the West and Arcadius in the East, and finally repealed by the latter, the Church continued to regard such marriages as incestuous, and gradually extended its prohibition to the seventh degree.*

Public opinion was in favour of the first prohibition, however it may have revolted against the penalty. We are told that when the marriage of cousin-germans was lawful, it rarely occurred, and was regarded with horror, as bordering upon incest.† And as a prepossession of this kind disposes men to credulity and superstition, Pope Gregory affirms, as a thing known by experience, that when cousin-germans intermarried‡ no progeny could be reared, ... as if there lay a curse upon such unholy unions. He instructed Augustine, however, to allow of marriage among the Anglo-Saxons in the third and fourth degrees; and being, it appears, questioned concerning this, as if in reprehension, by a certain Sicilian prelate, Felix by name, he assured him in reply that he had only granted this permission for policy, lest the converts should be disgusted with their new

* Bingham, b. xvi. c. xi. § 4.

† St. Augustine quoted by Bingham, *ut supra*.

‡ Bede, l. c. c. xxvii. p. 19.

religion if they were subjected to all its restraints;* but that when the faith should have taken root in their land, it was his intention that no marriage should be permitted within the seventh degree, and this not of consanguinity merely, but of affinity† also. It is very possible that the decree past at the Council of Herudford was framed in the same spirit of duplicity as Pope Gregory's instructions, and that, while one thing was expressed, another was intended.

In ages when the whole of the agricultural population was attached to the soil, when the different classes of society were separated by distinctions almost as strong as those which distinguish the casts in India, and when there was little intercourse between one part of the country and another, it must have been difficult for any person, except those of the highest rank,

* Decret. P. 2. Caus. 33. q. 3. ff. 417.

† "*Affinitas secundum canones est personarum proximitas ex coitu proveniens, omne carens parentelâ. Et dicitur affinitas quasi duorum ad unum finem unitas; eo quod duæ cognationes diversæ per nuptias secundum leges, vel per coitum secundum canones copulantur; et alter ad alterius cognationis finem accedit. Scias autem quod affinitas est perpetuum impedimentum, quod durat etiam mortuâ personâ quâ mediante contrahitur.*" This is the *Affinitatis Declaratio* subjoined to the *Arbor Affinitatis* in the Decretals.

to find women of their own station who were not related within the prohibited degree; it would be so now in a Highland parish, and in many parts of Wales. But as if these prohibitions were not sufficiently comprehensive, it was held that when a man and woman engaged as sponsors to the same infant, they contracted thereby a spiritual relationship, which made it unlawful for them to intermarry.

I have shown that the Romish Church in many of its corruptions accommodated itself to existing customs and persuasions, partaking in some cases the delusion which it fostered. No such extenuation can be offered for these prohibitions, which were not more unwarranted by the laws of God and man, than they were unreasonable in themselves and vexatious in their operation. They were, indeed, so opposed to the general feelings of mankind, so gratuitously oppressive, and so sure to produce great inconvenience and evil, that it seems difficult to account for their introduction. The more I have searched into the history of the Romish Church, the more I have found cause to suspect that they originated in the difficulty with which the first converts among the northern conquerors were brought to submit to the regulations of Christian matrimony. Our Edwin of Northum-

bria affords a rare, perhaps a solitary instance, wherein the conversion of a heathen prince was the result of long reflection, and a sincere conviction that the faith which he embraced was true. The usual motives were merely politic; and if such converts as the ferocious Clovis conformed in appearance to the new religion which they professed, it was as much as could be hoped. Upon the question of marriage, the point upon which they were most unwilling to conform, a tacit compromise appears to have been made. They could not openly be allowed to retain their habits of polygamy; but, by widening the circle of the prohibited degrees, means were afforded them for having as many wives as they pleased in succession: it was but to find a flaw of this nature in the marriage when a chieftain was tired of his wife, and the ecclesiastical authorities assisted him in his desire of dismissing her, and permitted him to take another in her stead. Whatever you may think, Sir, of the suspicion I have expressed, your own reading will have furnished you with cases enough which might be adduced to support it.

Your associate in the vote of thanks, Sir, touched upon an unlucky subject when he accused me, with his wonted veracity and wonted

manners, of falsifying Archbishop Theodore's decree respecting divorce. Few subjects could more strikingly illustrate the tyranny and the cupidity of the Romish Church, the oppressiveness of its principles, and the profligacy of its practice. For whatever may have been the motive for introducing these injurious laws, the reason for continuing them is palpable. They formed part of the ways and means of the Romish see; and the very Church, which taught that these degrees of relationship were of such importance as to nullify the sacrament of marriage, (as marriage in that Church is held to be,) was at any time ready to dispense with the impediment for a price; ... to dispense with it not in those cases only where the common feelings and common sense of mankind accorded with the dispensation, but in extreme and monstrous cases, to the violation of both, legitimating connections* between uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew. Marriages which had been contracted for true affection and in good faith were annulled by this inhuman Church, if the price for

* By a law of Constantine and Constans such connections were to be punished by death. *Si quis filiam fratris sororisve faciendam crediderit abominanter uxorem, aut in ejus amplexum, non ut patruus aut avunculus convolaverit, capitalis sententiæ pœnâ teneatur.*—Cod. Theod. l. iii. tit. 12. p. 52. ed. 1593.

its indulgence was not forthcoming, or if it suited with the immediate interest or present temper of the reigning Pontiff to exercise the rigour of its laws; but its sanction was granted without hesitation to unions so unnatural that even state-policy and family pride would never have contemplated them as possible, if the governments which acquiesced in the usurpations of the Papal Court, and believed its figments, had not, at the same time, thoroughly understood its venality.*

* Having thus repelled Dr. Milner's charge of falsification, I retort it upon him, and lay my proofs before the reader.

In his strictures upon the Book of the Church (note, p. 11.) he says that "Southey himself avows the Moravians' fundamental fanaticism of instantaneous conversion," and for proof of this assertion refers to a passage in the Life of Wesley, which passage, instead of containing any such avowal, exposes the futility of the reasoning whereby Wesley persuaded himself of the doctrine in question. The words are these—"Examining more particularly the Acts of the Apostles, he (Wesley) says that he was "utterly astonished at finding scarcely any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions,... scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the New Birth." Is it possible that a man of Wesley's acuteness should have studied the Scriptures as he had studied them, till the age of five-and-thirty, without perceiving that the conversions which they record are instantaneous? and is it possible that he should not now have perceived they were necessarily instantaneous, because they were produced by plain miracles?"—vol. i. p. 159.

The reader who may incline to think that Dr. Milner has mistaken the meaning of this passage, and not intentionally misrepresented it, compliments his honesty at the expense of his understanding. How far his honesty deserves to be so complimented, will be seen from the second instance. He says (p. 30) that at Bainham's martyrdom, "a miracle, exceeding that of the Three Children in the Babylonian furnace, was wrought upon him, according to Fox, *whom Southey follows*: when his arms and legs were half consumed, they tell us, he 'cried out from the midst of the flames, Ye Papists, see a miracle! I feel no more pain than if I were in a bed of down.' It is true that Southey has followed Fox in relating this, but the relation is followed by these words: "The fact may be believed without supposing a miracle, or even recurring to that almost miraculous power which the mind sometimes can exercise over the body. Nature is more merciful to us than man to man. This was a case in which excess of pain had destroyed the power of suffering: no other bodily feeling was left but that of ease after torture; while the soul triumphed in its victory, and in the sure anticipation of its immediate and eternal reward."—*Book of the Church*, vol. ii. p. 19.

Dr. Milner asserts also (p. 71.) that Southey, speaking of Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, says of them, "they were both women of saintly piety." Southey is neither so ignorant of history, nor so regardless of truth, as to have said this of either, though he regards the misfortunes, the errors, and even the crimes of the one with compassion, and the general conduct of the other with that proud and grateful sense of respect and admiration which every whole-hearted Englishman must feel. What he has said is this—"Two persons so circumstanced with regard to each other as the Queens of England and Scotland, must have been mortal enemies, unless they had been women of saintly piety and virtue. Both were endowed with extraordinary talents; and in the natural dispositions of both, it is pro-

bable that the better qualities greatly preponderated. But they were so situated that it was scarcely possible for them to think, or act, justly towards each other."—*Book of the Church*, vol. ii. p. 274.

If Dr. Milner ventures thus to misrepresent a living writer who is able to vindicate himself, and a book which any person may refer to without difficulty, the reader will judge how far such a controversialist is to be trusted in his references to those works of the dead which few have the opportunity of consulting, and fewer still the inclination. In the present instance it may seem strange that he should not have been deterred from such practices by the apprehension of exposure; but former success had emboldened him, and the Titular Prelate knew very well for whom he was writing. He knew that the persons among whom his Strictures would be circulated would think it a sin to look into any refutation of them; and that in the opinion of the few members of his own Church who understand what credit is due to his authority, such an exposure could do him no injury. The most learned of those Roman Catholics cannot think worse of him than they have already publicly spoken; and by the others, as long as he is true to their party, the tricks by which he supports it will be accounted meritorious.

ST. DUNSTAN.

We come now, Sir, to that well-known personage, St. Dunstan, concerning whom you and I differ *toto cœlo*. You are convinced that he "is entitled to the praise of probity, talent, and true religion."* I regard him, upon the statement of his own friends and accomplices, as a complete exemplar of the monkish character in its worst form.

In your solicitude that his sanctity should appear to have been without alloy, you deny that the early part of his life exhibits any indication of ambition, and represent him as "retiring in his youth from the dignities and gaudes of the world." But the fact is not concealed even by Dr. Lingard, that he was a disappointed courtier; and the resolution of retiring from the world, which you represent as having been formed during the serious hours of a long illness, and, in common with that historian, as being executed after his recovery, was in reality a sudden resolution, taken and carried into effect under the immediate† fear of death.

* Page 57.

† We are told by his contemporary biographer that the disease came upon him suddenly, his kinsman, Bishop Elphege,

Misrepresentations of this kind detract something from the credit of an author when they originate in carelessness: they affect his character deeply if they are frequent and systematical;... if they are always of the same kind,... if there be a constant endeavour to put a false colouring upon facts, glossing and softening them down, or keeping in the shade those which will not bear daylight.

But the manner in which you, and the living Romanists upon whom you pin your historical belief, have treated the story of Edwy and Elgiva, is of more importance. You repeat, Sir, without any apparent scruple, a statement which even Dr. Lingard did not at first hint at without saying, "*if we may listen to the scandal of the age.*"* Scandal I dare pronounce it to be,....

having prayed God to inflict some chastisement upon him for wishing rather to marry a woman with whom he was in love, than to profess as a monk, as he had exhorted him to do, *quod, Deo misericorditer favente, in parvi momenti spatio factum comprobatur fuisse. Eo namque modo turgentium vesicarum dolor intolerabilis omne corpus ipsius obtexit, ut elephantinum morbum se pati putaret, et spem vitæ propriæ penitus non haberet. Tunc* festinanter, magno angore correptus, misit, et ad se Pontificem, jam ante à se spretum, humili prece vocavit, et obedire se velle ejus salutaribus monitis nuntiavit: et ille visitando veniens, consolatum et emendatum Deo monachum consecravit.—Acta SS. Mai. t. iv. p. 349.

* Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 400.

and worse than scandal,...a slander of the foulest kind, invented and propagated by a successful faction for blackening the character of a Queen whom they had murdered. The Roman Catholic historian, however, who thus insinuates it in his text, has taken no common pains to support it in his notes, regarding the story, not without reason, as one in which the character of the Romish Church and two of its canonized worthies is implicated. . .

Let us look at the circumstances as they are related by Romish or by Protestant writers, premising that both parties derive their statements from the same authorities. On the one side there are Dr. Milner (the John Merlin of whose veracity some samples have already been adduced) and Dr. Lingard; on the other there are Carte and Rapin and Hume and Henry and Turner; names which include the most sagacious, the most impartial, the most laborious, and the most accurate of our historians. You, Sir,* in accord with the two Romish writers, follow the contemporary biographer of Dunstan in asserting that a woman of high rank but weak intellects had laid a scheme for making the young King Edwy marry either herself or

* Page 59.

her daughter; that she sought to accomplish this end by seducing him with "familiar and shameful blandishments;" and that, in pursuance of this scheme, he was allowed to carry his intimacy with both as far as it could go. Having intimated thus much, you say "decency compels us to suppress the rest of the scandalous narrative." Dr. Lingard* gives the substance of that narrative in a note, but in the original Latin, saying, the reader must excuse these quotations, because it was necessary to oppose them to the contrary assertions of modern writers. It is necessary for me also to relate it, and in a language which every reader may understand; for though it be indeed as little fit to be uttered as believed, it is only by plainly stating it that its loathsome falsehood can be shown. The monkish calumniator in whose statements the modern Romanists think proper to place implicit credit, represents the young King as committing the grossest debauchery with mother and daughter at the same time, ... in the same apartment... at noonday... and passing from the arms of the one to the arms of the other, ..and this without an attempt at privacy or concealment! Dr. Lingard had good reason

* Page 59.

for leaving this statement in the language of the villainous biographer upon whose word it rests; and you, Sir, had equal reason for suppressing what is too monstrous to be believed. Turner, whom, like yourself, I am proud to call our common friend, pronounces it to be *incredible*;*...and I appeal to human nature if it be not so! I appeal to the common feeling and common sense of mankind, which is the more credible...that this unnatural, this monstrous charge should be true, or that the monk who advanced it should be a slanderer and a liar?

The counter-statement, which Drs. Milner and Lingard have chosen not to believe, is not only credible in itself, but so likely, that no unprejudiced person could for a moment hesitate between the two discordant relations. Edwy had married Elgiva, though she was related to him within the prohibited degrees; and when the King, who, be it remembered, was a mere boy, left the coronation dinner and went to his wife and her mother, he amused himself with putting his crown first on the head of one, then of the other, and this in an apartment so near the hall, that the guests either saw or

* History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. ii. 403. 3d. edit.

heard how he was employed. Even monastic writers,* who have eulogized Dunstan for all his actions, and, regarding him as one of the heroes of their order, have represented the most nefarious exhibitions of his craft as miracles, have felt that the statement of his contemporary biographer confuted itself by its monstrosity, and given in its stead the credible relation in which every Protestant historian has followed them.

"That the Primate Odo," says Dr. Milner,† "pronounced a sentence of divorce between Edwy and Elgiva, whom he believed to have been never married together; and that he caused the former to be dethroned and the latter to be put to death, are circumstances utterly destitute of historical authority, and mere fictions of the poet." Is it possible, Sir, that you should have read this passage when you expressed your approbation of the pamphlet which contains it, by saying that‡ "if Dr. Milner had framed his

* The *Coronica General de S. Benito*, by Fr. Antonio de Yepes, is before me. The life of Dunstan in this very rare and valuable work is compiled from that by Osbert as printed by Surius, from Matthew of Westminster, Florence of Worcester, and Polidore Virgil: and thus Yepes relates the story.

† Strictures, p. 14.

‡ Dedication to the Book of the Roman-Catholic Church.

Strictures upon the Book of the Church on a more extensive plan, they would have rendered any other answer to it unnecessary"? If these are indeed mere fictions of my invention, utterly destitute of historical authority, then am I utterly unworthy of belief, as being utterly destitute of truth. If, on the contrary, I have reported the facts as they are found in old and authentic documents,..documents which must have been as well known to Dr. Milner as to yourself, I leave you to form your own judgement upon the person who charges me with inventing them. You say, Sir, that you have attentively perused all the authorities concerning St. Dunstan, to which Dr. Lingard and Turner have referred; you therefore cannot but *know* that such a sentence of divorce was pronounced by Odo;* that Elgiva was murdered†

* An. D. 958. Þeꝛ on þiſſum ȝeaꝛe Oda aꝛcebiſcop toꝛpambe Eadꝛi cyninȝ ⁊ Ælfȝyfe. foꝛ þæm þe hi hæꝛon to ȝeꝛyldbe.—*Saxon Chronicle*, 150. ed. 1823.

Dr. Milner must have seen this passage, though it is not in the earlier printed copies of the Saxon Chronicle, because it is given both by Mr. Turner, who first observed it in the MSS. Tib. B. 4., and by Dr. Lingard.

† *Ab hominibus Servi Dei comprehensa, et ne meretricio more ulterius vaga discurreret, subnervata, post dies aliquot malâ morte præsenti vitâ sublata est. Erat quippe summus Pontifex Odo vir virtutum robore, et grandævitatis maturitate ac constantiâ fultus,*

by his people; and that he is eulogized by his

et omnium iniquitatum inflexibilis adversarius.—Osbern in Vitâ S. Odonis, Acta SS. Jul. t. ii. p. 71.

The same author, in his life of Dunstan, says, that after hamstringing the victim of their barbarity, they put her to death ... *ipsam quidem juxta Claudiam civitatem repertam, subnervavere, deinde quâ digna fuerat morte mulctavere.*—Acta SS. Mai. t. iv. 368.

Dr. Lingard (Antiquities, N. V. pp. 524—527) labours, not only to support the old scandal, but to make it appear that it was the mother of Elgiva, not Elgiva herself, who in his gentle language "*was compelled to quit the kingdom, and venturing to return, perished during the revolt,*"...that is, who had her face burnt with hot irons, for the purpose of disfiguring it, by S. Odo's orders, and was afterwards hamstrung by his people, and put to death. Were his argument conclusive, the conduct of Odo would be not the less atrocious; but it rests upon a subtlety of interpretation wherein he is opposed by every other writer, and upon uncertain dates. Elgiva is as plainly intended by all the elder authors as she is named by Spelman and Father Alford.

It is worthy of remark that Dr. Lingard in his History (vol. i. p. 235) omits all mention of the first barbarity practised upon Elgiva, that of disfiguring her face with red hot irons. These are his words:—"Archbishop Odo undertook to remove the scandal by enforcing the punishment which the laws awarded against women living in a stage of concubinage. Accompanied by his retainers, he rode to the palace, arrested Ethelgiva, probably in the absence of her lover, conducted her to the sea-side, and put her on board a ship, in which she was conveyed to Ireland. At his return to court, he waited on Edwy, and in respectful and affectionate language endeavoured to justify his

biographers for the act.* So much for Dr. Milner's assertions! Never let his bust be made in any thing but bronze, for that "undaunted metal" is the only material which can represent him to the life.

You venture next, with some valour, Sir, but more discretion, to touch upon the miracles of St. Dunstan. You remind me that "the period in which the miracles *attributed* to Dunstan were performed, was the darkest period in the Roman Catholic history." You observe, with Dr. Lingard, that men in that age were in a state of mind to expect miraculous events, and to be the dupes of their own credulity; and that, like those who are supposed to be "gifted with the second-sight, they would see what they did not see, and hear what they did

own conduct, and to sooth the exasperated mind of the young prince." This is a fair sample of the treacherous manner in which Dr. Lingard's history is written wherever the interests of his Church are concerned.

* The Severe Odo is one of the epithets by which he was usually characterized (see the *Comm. Prævius* to his life in the Acta SS. § 13.) After what has here already been adduced, it would be needless to multiply testimonies for showing that he was the author of the act, and that he was commended for it: they may be seen in F. Alford, who applauds the fact as intrepidly as Dr. Milner denies it. See his Annales; vol. iii. pp. 311—313.

not hear."* We shall find, upon examination, Sir, that the miracles *performed* by Dunstan were both actually seen, and heard, and felt moreover: and that the people who believed them, were the dupes of something more than credulity. You ask if our own country does not, in the present enlightened age, abound with superstitions: you bid me inquire of the village beadles and the village dames; ... as if there were any similitude between the superstitions which are now believed by persons of those descriptions, and the wonders which were then recorded, attested, and exhibited by the Heads of the Clergy, the Primate, St. Dunstan himself, being chief performer, as his predecessor Odo, a Saint of the same stamp, had been before him. And you assert that I myself have recorded the miraculous incidents in the Life† of John Wesley.. Indeed, Sir?.. Can you so entirely misunderstand what has been clearly understood by all the Methodists who have perused that life? It is part of their complaint against me that, having related those incidents, I have divested them of the miraculous pretensions which the Society would fain support.

There is a good classification of Saints in my

* Pages 68—70. † Page 70.

old favourite Fuller's Introduction to his Worthies.* He distributes them into—1. Saints of Fiction, who never were *in rerum naturâ*, as St. Christopher, &c. 2. Saints of Faction, wherewith, says he, our age doth swarm, alleging two arguments for their Saintship:—first, that they so call themselves; secondly, that those of their own party call them so. 3. Saints of Superstition, reputed so by the Court of Rome, &c. 4. Saints indeed! and so deserving to be honoured." But Fuller's third class is to be subdivided. Some of the Romish Saints were excellent and exemplary men, worthy of every respect and honour, short of the veneration which has been paid them. There are then the holy Simpletons, such as the blessed Juniper, whose adventures I shall notice in their proper place: and there are the *Heautontimorumeni*, men as sincere, as pious, and as mistaken in their piety as the Indian Yoguees. St. Dominic the Cuirassier, F. Joam d'Almeida, and the blessed Arnulph of the hedgehog-skin underwaistcoat, are good examples of this class.† Among those who tor-

* Vol. i. p. 7. Nichols's Edition.

† "I cannot," says the delightful old writer* whom I have

* Ut supra, p. 8.

mented others, there are some in whose history it is difficult to perceive where delusion ended

just quoted, "but sadly bemoan that the lives of these Saints are so *darkened* with Popish illustrations, and farced with *Fauxéties*, to their dishonour, and the detriment of Church history: for as honest men, casually cast into the company of cozeners, are themselves suspected to be cheats by those who are strangers unto them; so the very true actions of these Saints, found in mixture with so many forgeries, have a suspicion of falsehood cast upon them.

"Inquiring into the causes of this grand abuse, I find them reducible to five heads:

1. Want of honest hearts in the Biographists of these Saints, which betrayed their pens to such abominable untruths.

2. Want of able heads, to distinguish rumours from reports, reports from records; not choosing, but gathering; or rather not gathering, but scraping what could come to their hands.

3. Want of true matter to furnish out those lives in any proportion. As cooks are sometimes fain to lard lean meat, not for fashion, but necessity, as which otherwise would hardly be eatable for the dryness thereof; so these having little of these Saints more than their names and dates of their deaths (and those sometimes not certain), do plump up their emptiness with such fictious additions.

4. Hope of gain; so bringing in more custom of pilgrims to the shrines of the Saints.

5. Lastly, for the same reason for which Herod persecuted St. Peter, (for I count such lies a persecuting of the Saints memories)... merely because they saw it pleased the people.

"By these and other causes it is come to pass that the observation of Vives is most true: *Quæ de Sanctis scripta sunt, præter pauca quædem, multis fœdata sunt commentis, dum qui*

and wickedness began; and lastly, there are those concerning whom no such hesitation can be felt, and at whose head St. Dunstan may be placed.

But St. Dunstan, Sir, you tell us, is considered by "those who have perused Dr. Lingard's account of him, and consulted the authorities which he has cited, as an ornament* to his religion and his country." And whereas I have represented the fall of the floor at Calne as a contrivance† of this monastic worthy, you

scribit affectui suo indulget; et non quæ egit divus, sed quæ illum egisse vellet; exponit. (De Trad. Discrip. l. v.) What are written of the Saints, some few things excepted, are defiled with many fictions, whilst the writer indulgeth his own affection, and declareth not what the Saint did do, but what he desired that he should have done." To this let me couple the just complaint of that honest Dominican Melchior Canus:— *Dolenter hoc dico, multò severius a Laertio vitas Philosophorum scriptas, quàm à Christianis vitas Sanctorum; longeque incorruptius et integrius Suetonium res Cæsarum exposuisse, quàm exposuerunt Catholici, non res dico Imperatorum, sed Martyrum, Virginum et Confessorum.* (L. xi. c. 6.) "I speak it to my grief," saith he, "that the Lives of the Philosophers are more gravely written by Laertius than Saints are by Christians; and that Suetonius hath recorded the actions of the Cæsars with more truth and integrity than Catholics have the lives, I say not of Princes, but even of Martyrs, Virgins, and Confessors."

* Page 67.

† Book of the Church, vol. i, p. 108.

are pleased to say, "every canon of history,... even the common duty of charity, requires that such an imputation should not be brought without strong evidence," and that for this imputation "the slightest evidence neither has been nor can be produced." Let us see!

There are certain circumstances recorded by the biographers of this notorious Saint, which they represent as miracles, and consequently as proofs of his sanctity; and in this they have been followed by all the Romanists till the present age. Some of the old Protestant writers ascribed them to his skill in magic; later ones, believing as little in magic as in his or any other Romish miracles, explained them by ventriloquism and by machinery. The course which the Romanists now take is to keep some of these unpleasant facts out of sight, to treat others as fables, and boldly assert that the fall of the floor at Calne, which we affirm to have been a palpable and atrocious contrivance, involving impiety in its design and murder in its execution, and which is too well attested as an historical event to be either concealed or denied... was merely an accident. You, Sir, in pursuance of this plan of defence, assert that no proof whatever of contrivance in this tragedy has been

suggested.* And Dr. Lingard says, "if we divest the real fact of its modern embellishments, it will be reduced to this, that the floor sank under the accumulated weight of the crowd; that the Archbishop had the good fortune to support himself by a beam; and that of the others some were killed, and many were hurt in the fall. More than this," he says, "was unknown to any ancient writer: the contrivance and object ascribed to Dunstan are the fictions of later† writers." In this statement you follow Dr. Lingard, affirming these to be "the *only*‡ circumstances which history has transmitted to us." But these are *not* the only circumstances; neither are those which are contained in the statement either exactly or faithfully represented. They are not the only ones, because the noticeable circumstance is omitted, that the King was not present, his youth being the pretext for keeping him away; and the still more important circumstance is withheld, that Dunstan,§ finding the sense of

* Page 67.

† Hist. of England, vol. i. 250. First edition.

‡ Page 67.

§ "*Dunstanus autem longo quidem senio et magnis Ecclesiæ laboribus effractus, jam præter orationem post tergum omnia posuerat. Attamen pars iniqua, divino quondam miraculo victa, ne*

the assembly decidedly against him, said he would dispute no longer, but would commit the cause to Christ himself as judge. The catastrophe is not exactly stated by Dr. Lingard, nor by yourself; the original statement being, not that Dunstan "had the good fortune to support himself by a beam," but that no injury happened to that part of the floor on which he* and his party had stationed them,

nunc de adipiscendâ gloriarctur victoriâ, hoc in hostes responsionis jaculum vibrat: Quoniam, inquit, tanto tempore elapso, calumniæ ansam non prætendistis, nunc autem senescentem me ac taciturnatati operam dantem antiquis querelis deservire contenditis; fateor, vincere vos nolo: Ecclesiæ suæ causam Christo judici committo! Dixit, et quod dixit, irati Dei censura firmavit. Mox etenim concussa domus cœnaculum sub pedibus solutum hostes solo præcipitati, ac ruentium trabium pondere oppressi. * UBI VERO CUM SUIS SANCTUS ACCUBITABAT, IBI NULLA RUINÆ SUFFUSIO FIEBAT."—Osbern. Acta SS. Mai, t. iv. p. 372.

Osbern was incautious enough in his manner of relating the story to let the contrivance appear. Later writers, therefore, found it expedient to vary from him in describing the catastrophe; so they made Dunstan support himself upon one of the beams, and left the reader to suppose that his friends were involved in the ruin with his enemies. The story of the Inquisitor is well known, who, when a town of the Albigenses was to be stormed, and the Catholic crusaders expressed some apprehension that they might not be able to distinguish the orthodox from the heretics, cut short the difficulty by saying "Kill them all, and God will know his own!" But when a point of Romish religion is to be decided by a special inter-

selves. Methinks, Sir, the story assumes a very different character when these momentous particulars are stated, from what it bears in the curtailed and cautious representation made by yourself and Dr. Lingard.

You have also kept out of sight those previous circumstances in St. Dunstan's history which show him to have been a master in his craft. You are not ignorant of the fact, Sir, though Dr. Lingard passes it over in prudent silence, that before Dunstan had any pretensions to sanctity, and while he was living a secular life, and seeking advancement as a courtier, he was accused of sorcery, and upon that

position of Providence, it spoils the miracle if the discrimination between the two parties were not to be made till the necks of both were broken.

"Some," says Fuller, "behold this story as a notable untruth; others suspect the Devil therein, not for a lyar, but a murtherer, and this massacre procured by compact with him; a third sort conceived that Dunstan, who had so much of a smith, had here something of a carpenter in him, and some device used by him about pinning and propping up the room; It renders it the more suspicious, because he dissuaded King Edward from being present there, pretending his want of age; though he was present in the last council, and sure he was never the younger for living some months since the same assembly. If truly performed, Dunstan appears happier herein than Samson himself, who could not so sever his foes but both must die together."—*Church History*, 133.

charge disgraced and driven from Athelstan's court. A premature exhibition of his skill as a ventriloquist* brought upon him this imputation; and he was accused, not for this display alone, but for performing† many things by aid of the Devil. If to this evidence of his early practices the story of the speaking crucifix‡ at the

* See Book of the Church, vol. i. 93.

† When the harp began to sing, ... *exiliunt obstrepentes puellulæ, paterfamilias, omnisque domus clientela vociferans hominem nimium esse sapientem, amplius eum quàm quod expediat scire.* The Devil instigated certain persons to accuse him of sorcery after this display. *Asserentes illum malis artibus imbutum, nec quidquam divino auxilio, sed pleraque Dæmonum præstigio operari.* —Osbern, ut supra, 362.

‡ See Book of the Church, i. 108.

The secret of this miracle, according to Polidore Virgil, was suspected at the time; "*Verum quia imago Christi de cruce pendentis, visa est eam reddidisse vocem, ita fides habita est oraculo, ut Presbyteri causâ cecidcrint, et turba omnis sedata sit; atque sic monachi, ope divinâ*, vel humanâ potius (nam etiam tunc non defuerunt qui oraculum Phœbi, magis quàm Dei fuisse, hoc est hominum fraude, non Dei nutu editum putârint) *utcumque parta retinuerint.*" I find this passage in Yepes, who, in an attempt to disprove Polidore's opinion, fairly admits that the circumstance might be thought a trick if it had occurred before an ignorant assembly. "*Y si aquella maraña, ó ficcion que el dize, se hiziera delante de quatro ó seys personas ignorantes, aun nos pudiera persuadir, que avia sido juego de manos, ó de boca, ó efetos de algun embaydor. Pero estando el Rey presente, los Grandes de la Corte, los Arçobispos, Obispos, Abades, y toda al*

Synod of Winchester be added, I believe that no person who is not a Romanist will acquit

gente mas granada del reyno, es engaño pensar que à todos se avia de dar esta papilla. Bien se vee Christiano lector, quanto inconveniente trayga este modo de dezir; y lo que mas mueve, es ver, què San Dunstano estuviesse delante, y aquellos santos Abades, de quien hemos hecho commemoracion arriba, que fueron testigos deste acaesciminto; y aunque se engañassen los hombres ordinarios, pero gente alumbrada, y hecha a divinas revelaciones, ni ellos avian de hazer un embeleço, y trampa semejante, ni dexar de caer en la cuenta del verdadero sucesso."—Coronica Gen. de S. Benito, t. v. ff. 120.

A more unfortunate appeal to character has seldom been made. The Archbishops, Bishops, and Abbots, of whom he speaks, were parties in the cause for which the Image appeared as advocate; and the reason why suspicion rests upon them is because they were, as he truly says... *gente alumbrada, y hecha a divinas revelaciones.* A circumstance of some importance is noticed by Osbert.... Dunstan sate with his head hanging down, like one deep in thought, when the crucifix began to speak: "*silet ille...*, *quidque potissimuin de negotio agendum sit*, demisso capite, *mente pertractat: silentium ingens occupat omnes, et suspensi ad responsum Pontificis erigunt aures. Tunc subito Crucifixi Dei imago signo Crucis in edito affixa, audientibus cunctis dixit*, NON FIAT, NON FIAT, JUDICASTIS BENE, MUTARETIS NON BENE."—*Baronius*, t. x. p. 831. ed. 1603.

Mr. Alban Butler speaks cautiously of this affair. He says, "in this venerable assembly *was heard a voice as coming from a crucifix in the place*, which said distinctly, 'God forbid it should be so! You have judged well: to change your decree is not good.'" He says nothing of the former feat of ventri-

Dunstan of murderous contrivance in his crowning miracle at Calne. The machinery of such miracles is as intelligible as that by which his own quarter-boys in Fleet-street perform their office.

I need not, Sir, repeat the other circumstances in Dunstan's life, which, in the opinion of every Protestant, stamp him for an arch deceiver. Enough of them are stated in the Book of the Church; and I must remind you, in the words of our friend Turner, that "the history of this Saint is remarkably certain. All that we know of him comes from his friends and panegyrists." Even the facts against him are produced upon their testimony.* "It is our moral sympathies that have improved, not our historical evidence that has diminished." Your historian, Dr. Lingard, indeed, finds these circumstances so incapable of any other interpretation, that his resource is to depreciate the authority of Osbern. On other occasions he refers to him with full confidence, and even argues from his text upon points of minute

loquism, which was ascribed to magic, ... nor of the miracle at Calne. The old Romanists have not shown themselves more faithless in what they *say*, than their successors in what they *suppress*.

* History of the Anglo-Saxons,' vol. ii. pp. 429, 30. N. 47. 9.

chronology and laboured induction: but when these untoward miracles are in question, Osbern is then "an* injudicious biographer, whose anile credulity collected and embellished every fable." Unfortunately for this opinion, it appears that Osbern was educated at Canterbury, in Dunstan's own monastery, and that, whether the stories which he collected were fables or not, there he learnt them; that he enjoyed the friendship and confidence† of Archbishop Lanfranc; and that that Primate, in whose character there was certainly nothing anile, selected him, at the translation of Dunstan's body, to preach upon his miracles. Still more unfortunately it happens that all the biographers of all the Romish Saints were credulous in the same way. Is this remarkable conformity the effect of accident, or must it be imputed to design and system? No, Sir! the ship St. Peter, bearing for its flag the keys and triple crown in a field gules, is not to escape by throwing Osbern overboard, as if he were the Jonah for whose only offence the storm has overtaken her! The poor Præcentor of Canterbury is not more concerned in these illicit

* Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 397. N. 6.

† Acta SS. Mai. t. iv. 345. Do. Mai. t. vi. p. 832.

dealings than master, mate, supercargo and crew, for the vessel is engaged in the trade! If the tales in question were mere fictions, they would still, I maintain, be proofs of that system of imposture which the Romish Clergy and the Romish Church were carrying on; for they were invented, propagated, recorded and sanctioned by Monks, Saints, Prelates, Cardinals, and Popes, in furtherance of that system. But in this case they are worse than fictions; they are facts. They were not invented by lying biographers, but planned and perpetrated by Dunstan and his associates. They were appealed to by the Romanists (your boasted Baronius,* Sir, among the rest) as examples of divine vengeance upon his opponents. They are appealed to by Protestants, as proofs of that scheme of fraud which the Romish Church has uniformly carried on.

* He relates the Calne miracle after Matthew of Westminster, and concludes with him thus: *hoc miraculum contulit pacem Beato Dunstano, et monachis, ab impetu Clericorum et aliorum, gratiâ hæc et similia operante divinâ.* Alford. t. iii. p. 394.

De ultione divinâ in ejus adversarios ostensâ, is the title of the chapter in the Speculum Historiale which tells of the speaking crucifix at Winchester, and the catastrophe at Calne.—Vinc. Bel. l. xxiv. c. lxxx. ff. 318, Ed. 1494.

There is another and very different class of miracles, of which Fuller* says that "he who shall go about seriously to confute such tales, is as very a fool as he was somewhat else who first impudently invented and vented them." I observe, Sir, that you and your fellow-champions for the Romish cause are very sensitive concerning miracles of this class. You seem to think it ungenerous that they should be mentioned, and that you have a right to complain when a Protestant brings forward what you call "the† miserable story of St. Dunstan's pinching the Devil's nose, and other tales of this sort, and represents them as forming part of the faith or doctrines of the (Roman) Catholic Church." As part of its doctrines, Sir, they have never been brought forward, for with doctrine they have nothing to do, nor with faith, in the proper sense of that word; but in the looser acceptation wherein the latter word is frequently used to signify belief, they certainly form a part of that popular faith which it was and is the constant endeavour of the Romish Church to promote. They are brought forward, therefore, by Protestants, not as parts of the esoteric doctrines of the Romish Church,

* Worthies, vol. i. 527. † Page 49.

but of its exoteric mythology: they are quoted as showing what the fables were with which the people were deluded. The tale of St. Dunstan and the Devil's nose appears at present peculiarly offensive to the admirers and advocates of that worshipful Saint. It has only been so since Mr. Turner made the right use of it. In former times it was especially popular, and not with the vulgar and ignorant alone. Even in later days some of the most elegant scholars of the Romish Church exercised their pens upon it. The Jesuit Angelinus Gazæus versified it among other tales of the same kind in his *Pia Hilaria*,* for the edification of youth. You find it in the *Lararium*

* A book which was to supersede some of the classic poets, ... for thus saith Mr. Butler's author, Father Jones, called in religion F. Leander de St. Martino, in the *Censura* affixed to the first volume:—

Hilares Iambi prodeant casto pede,
Tersi, rotundi, sed Latini, sed pii,
Mel à Poetis ethnicis simile petas?
Aconita potiùs. Ite, quò meritum vocat,
Ovidi, Catulle, Martialis, improbis
Maculare juvenes sordibus nati choros:
Habet hic abunde, quidquid est vobis, salis,
Habet et politum, et, quod deest vobis, pium,
Mea tu Juventus fugito Tartareos sales,
Et hos salubres legito cum fructu jocos,
Teretes, acutos, virgineos, summâ pios.

*Poeticum** of Gregorius Bulzius, and in the *Annus Sacer*† of the Jesuit Sautel. These men lived not in dark ages, nor in ignorant countries, and they thought that by embellishing this very story, and putting it into the hands of youth for edification, they were performing, I will not say a religious, but a professional‡ duty!

* *Seu de Cœlitibus Epigrammata.* Novocomi, 1665. The most remarkable thing in this book is the account which the author gives of himself, as finding two or three hours sleep sufficient. Being too much employed in his sacred functions to have any leisure for so light an occupation as poetry by day, he borrowed part of the night, he says, for the composition of these verses. *Ut natura omnium, si velimus, paucis est contenta, sic mea breviori ut plurimum somno contentissima. Bina vel trina hora a cubitu experrectus, aliquod crebro spatium temporis meditandis epigrammatum argumentis, pangendisque versibus insumebam, quos dein, appetente die, exscribebam, unde tandem hi duodecim de Cœlitibus libelli sunt enati. Ad Lectorem.*

† *Annus Sacer Poeticus, sive Selecta de Divis Cœlitibus Epigrammata, in singulos Anni dies tributa.*—Lugduni. 1679. 2 tom.

‡ Sautel's work was published after his death by his friend and fellow Jesuit Calmels, to whom the manuscript had been bequeathed for that purpose; and the editor speaks thus of these Romish Fasti, which actually contain more fables than the Fasti of Ovid, with the Metamorphoses to boot. *Ausim meo periculo spondere futurum, ut hoc egregium Viri optimi monumentum, non modò apud pium, sed et eruditum Lectorem recto stet talo, plausum et επισημασιαν ferat, dum Religio Catholica stabit. Etenim Annus Sacer, Sanctorum qui per anni currentis singulos dies occurrunt elogia et πανηγυρικοι λόγοι, mirum dictu quantum hi valeant ad bene moratos homines efficiendos, &c.*

Before we dismiss the story, it will be proper to notice Dr. Lingard's remark, that it was "unknown* to the contemporary author of his life." As if that author were so free from the original sin of monkish nature, that his work contains no such tales! If he does not relate this "nocturnal conflict with the Devil," (as the historian phrases it) does he relate no other conflicts with the same personage? no other interviews and adventures, with him quite as miraculous,... and quite as authentic, though not indeed so picturesque, and therefore not so popular? Had the Romish historian of his Church forgotten that in this contemporary piece of biography the Devil figures in the various forms of a bear, a dog, a viper, and a fox?† that it relates how the Saint struck at him once with a stick, and, missing his blow, the sound of the stick against the wall was heard through the whole‡ church? how he threw a stone§ at the Saint, which knocked off his cap; and how the Saint saw him dancing‖ for joy?... for it appears by these sanctified writers that the Devil dances and sings when he is pleased. Could he hope that Bredfirth's cha-

* Anglo-Saxon Church, 397. N. 6.

† Acta SS. Mai. t. iv. 352.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid. ‖ Ibid. 357.

racter for veracity or discretion (if he be indeed the author) was to be established by showing that he has not related this one fable, when so many other fables of the same kind are woven with the web of his work! But these things are no more peculiar to Bredfirth than they are to Osbern, whom Dr. Lingard, and you, Sir, after him, would make the scape-goat on this occasion. Poets have not made more free in all ages with the Muse, than monkish biographers with the Devil. You and I, Sir, have been voluminous writers; but if all the anecdotes of the Devil which the Bollandists have inserted in their collection were selected and put together, they would fill more volumes than we have both committed to the press.

No man that ever wore a cowl could swallow camels more easily than the Spanish Benedictine Antonio de Yepes: an elephant, with a castle on his back, would not have choked him: yet he strains at a gnat sometimes; and, when relating how the verse for Bede's epitaph was completed by an invisible hand, boldly professes his incredulity, and delivers a grave opinion that it was a stratagem* of the Devil's to invent such tales and insert them in the lives

* Coronica de S. Benito, t. iii. ff. 55.

of the Saints. The motive which he imputes to Satan for this refined policy is, that men of learning might disdain to read such lives, or to employ themselves in writing sacred biography, like the Theodorets, the Jeromes, and the Gregories of other times. Were then the Theodorets, the Jeromes, and the Gregories, so free from all alloy of fiction in their works? And did this erudite and sagacious Benedictine (for sagacious as well as erudite he was) overlook the necessary inference, that if such fables were inspired by the father of lies, Monks, Prelates and Popes, Doctors and Fathers of the Church, and even Saints themselves were his instruments for publishing them? Nevertheless, well as it would suit my argument to take up this opinion, and press the legitimate consequence, the Devil must, I think, be acquitted of all share in inventing any of the numerous tales wherein he bears a part. The well-known story of the Pious Painter (which is as authentic as any other of this class, and as gravely recorded for an edifying fact) represents him as warmly resenting any thing which tended to disparage him in public opinion. He could not even bear to have his likeness unfavourably painted; and as no tribunal would award him damages when he had been thus

caricatured, was at such pains to revenge himself; that some extraordinary miracles were worked to disappoint him. If then the Prince of Darkness be so tenacious in matters relating merely to his personal appearance, how could the good Benedictine imagine that he (who "is a gentleman") would compose libels upon himself which tended to render him despised and ridiculous as well as odious? Would he have represented himself as defied and insulted by every Saint in the Kalendar,...holding a candle for St. Dominic (for example) in the shape of a monkey,* and compelled to hold it till it was

* That the reader may see the manner in which such fables were promulgated as serious and even sacred truth, I insert the original account of the miracle, as it stands in the *Acta Ampliora* of this prodigious Saint, quæ F. Theodoricus *de Appoldia, suppar Ordinis Prædicatorum scriptor, ex variis antiquioribus monumentis collegit.*

"*Accidit...cum Vir Dei in oratione usque ad noctis medium vigilasset, ut egressus de ecclesiâ, ad lumen candelæ in capite dormitorii sedens scriberet. Et ecce dæmon in specie simiæ apparens, cœpit gestus illusorios cum torsione vultûs coram ipso deambulans exercere. Tunc Sanctus ei manu innuit, ut fixus staret, dans ei candelam, ut ante se teneret, accensam; qui tenens nihilominus gestus cum irrisione vultus faciebat. Interea finitur candela, cœpitque ardere digitus simiæ, et quasi præ dolore torquendo se lamentari, cum tamen Gehennæ ignibus ardens flammam non timeat corporalem. Sanctus autem ei, ut staret adhuc, innuit. Quid plura? Tam diu stans permansit, donec digitus indicialis usque ad juncturam manûs totus crematus est, et magis ac magis se tor-*

burnt to the last snuff in his paw?... plucked by hens in the shape of a sparrow?*... fastened in the shape of a flea to the book which the same great wonder-worker was reading, and not allowed to skip farther than from one page to another, as the Saint turned over the leaves; for Dominic, instead of cracking him, was contented with making him serve as a marker through the volume?... beaten, trampled on, pulled by the nose, soused with holy water? exhibited by S. Opportuna to all her nuns like a wild beast in a cage? outraged, taunted, and put to shame in all imaginable ways? The part which is assigned to the Devil in books of hagiography is that of the clown in the pantomime; and Grimaldi would have represented

quendo lugebat. Sic in fide fortis Homo Dei volenti sibi illudere illudens, ferulâ quam semper secum portabat, percussit eum fortiter, dicens, Recede, nequam! insonuitque percussio acsi percussisset utrem siccum plenum vento. Tunc in parietem proximum se projiciens nusquam comparuit, fœtoremque post se reliquens, quis fuerit, patefecit. Verè meritò inter angelicas potestates coronandus est, qui tam potenter diabolicas confundit et reprimit pravitates.—Acta SS. Aug. t. i. 588.

Santel has chosen this subject for one of his epigrams, which concludes thus:—

Dum tulit ardentem Phlegetontius histrio ceram,
Tunc certè, aut nunquam, Lucifer ille fuit.

Annus Sacer. ii. 50.

* Acta SS. Aug. t. i. 588.

him more to the life than Fuseli or Sir Thomas Lawrence have done.

In what mood, Sir, were these tales invented? Was it with a sigh or a smile that your clergy, secular and regular, of all orders, and of all degrees in theology, repeated them, as things to be believed? The subject is not lightly to be dismissed, and as you have endeavoured to do it, with contempt, as if it were so palpably unjust to reproach the Romish Church upon this score, that the charge need only be mentioned to be dismissed with indignation. But the avowal of your own incredulity will not avail for the acquittal of that Church. I do not question your sincerity in the avowal; and in Great Britain you may make it safely: at the worst it can but expose you to a repetition of the civilities which you have formerly received from Dr. Milner and the Catholic Gentleman's Magazine. But I am surprized at the recrimination which you have attempted. You ask "if* a week passes without an advertisement of a child's caul in more than one of our newspapers?" Is the case in point, Sir? Are then the newspapers under the inspection and controul of members of the hierarchy? Is the

* Page 70.

superstition concerning such cauls encouraged by our clergy? Is it to be found in the Liturgy of the Church of England? Do they introduce it in their sermons? Do they carry on a trade in cauls? For the fables with which your Church is reproached are used to promote the sale of beads, scapularies, *agnus Dei's*, hearts, and other such implements of superstition. They occur *usque ad nauseam* in the lives of your Saints, in your Church histories, in your monastic chronicles; they are inserted in your devotional treatises; they are circulated at this very day with the full knowledge, approbation, and sanction of your Church, in countries where the Bible is a forbidden book; and by the authority of that Church they are printed in your Breviaries, and read in your Church service.

You have more than once expressed your admiration for the Jesuits, as a body of men not more distinguished by the services which they rendered to the Papal Church, than by their eminent attainments in every branch of learning. With whatever else they may be reproached, even their enemies will not charge them with any want of knowledge, or of discernment, or of prudence. Did you ever, Sir, meet with a practical religious work published by

the Jesuit Alonso de Andrade in the middle of the seventeenth century, and frequently reprinted, entitled the "Itinerary to Heaven?"* or with his "Patronage of Our Lady,"† which in some editions is printed with it? They are filled with fables, some of them as absurd and grotesque as others are revolting for their grossness and monstrosity. I am sure, were you to peruse these treatises, you would unequivocally acknowledge that there are more lies than pages in them; and that when the author collected them from other fablers and compilers of fables, he could not possibly have believed them himself. Anile credulity is not the failing of a Jesuit, especially of one who was allowed to appear as an author, and chosen to bear a part in the business of his order and of the world. Yet these works were licensed as containing "nothing contrary to the opinion of the Church, but being wholly in support of its doctrines, and therefore well worthy to be published for the general good." Father Andrade held the high office of "*Calificador* to the Supreme

* *Itinerario Historial, que debe guardar el Hombre para caminar al Cielo*, &c.—Lisbon, 1687.

† *Patrocinio de N. Señora. Como es Patrona Universal del Genero Humano la Beatissima Virgen Maria, Madre de Dios y Señora Nuestra.*

Council of the Holy and General Inquisition," which in his days was in full activity; and any person who should have expressed a disbelief of the thousand and one tales in these edifying works, would have fallen under the cognizance of that tribunal, and his offence have been qualified before it as heresy.

No, Sir: the number and the perpetual succession of fables with which your books are filled, can only be explained by the fact that a system of imposture has been carried on by the Romish Church. Those miracles, which you hear of with a sigh, were invented with a smile,...or they were actually performed with a grave face, and that sort of contentment at heart which a slight-of-hand-man feels when his room has been well filled, and his exhibition has gone off to the satisfaction of the company. Your clergy have dealt in them. "They have plowed wickedness; they have reaped iniquity; they have eaten the fruit of lies."*

In what has thus been written for the purpose of substantiating a charge of imposture and wickedness upon the Romish Church, I have been compelled to repeat expressions which you have thought proper sometimes to

* Hosea, x. 13.

protest against, and sometimes to deprecate. I entreat you, Sir, do not impute this to want of temper, or to any personal disrespect... but to a habit of expressing in the readiest words what is distinctly perceived and strongly felt,.. to a deep sense of the importance of the subject,..and to the necessity which this great argument must always impose upon one who in full sincerity undertakes it. With your statements I must deal as they deserve, and with your reasoning also; but even when I come to those assertions which, were it possible for you to prove them, would affect me as a man of intregrity even more than in my literary character, I will not forget the terms on which we have heretofore met, the pleasure which I have experienced in your society and at your table, and the courtesies which have passed between us... It is only when actually engaged in this vindication that I can regard you as an adversary: in the intervals, when that occupation is suspended, I am not sensible of any adversarious feeling; nothing remains but pleasant recollections. Were my temper irritable, (which all who know me will bear witness it is not,) I would on this occasion endeavour to control it. Even when insulted by such assailants as Dr. Milner, I might say of them

with Scaliger, "*Ego ejusmodi ingenia magis odi quam curo,*" if I cared for them enough to hate them,...if scorn did not supply the place of indignation. But in you, Sir, I have at least a courteous antagonist: when any thing unfair or unworthy appears in your argument, I attribute it to the weakness of a cause for which nothing better can be advanced; and when any thing occurs to which a harsher epithet might be applied, I impute it to the persons upon whose authority and good faith you have not more implicitly than imprudently relied. Bear you, Sir, with the plainness of an honest straightforward style, which expresses all that it means, as I on my part am willing to forgive injurious misrepresentations, and insinuations which mean more than they express! There will then be no breach of charity between us: and when we retire from the contest it will be with feelings of mutual good will.

LETTER VII.

CHARGES AGAINST THE MONKS OF WITHHOLDING KNOWLEDGE, AND OF "A DISPOSITION TO IMMODERATE SEVERITY."

WHEN I was composing Madoc, Sir, St. Dunstan served as a model for the Priest of Mexitli; and, as a proof that I had caught the general likeness, the resemblance was perceived and noticed in a reviewal of that poem. The view which I have taken of his character is that in which every Protestant writer has beheld it, from the days of Archbishop Parker. But you tell us* that till the Reformation this Saint was always considered as an ornament to his religion and his country; and you express your wonder that such a change of opinion should then have taken place without the discovery of a single new fact that could justify it... Suppose, Sir, the Turks were to be converted, and become a Christian people; would it surprize you if they were then to consider

* Pages 57—68.

Mahommed as an impostor? The history of his life would remain the same, but the Turks would have learnt to examine it. There were always men who knew what Dunstan had been, because they were men of the same stamp, and acted upon the same principles; but these were his successors in the craft, and of course would not betray its secrets; and if there were others who saw the truth, they dared not utter it till the Reformation brought with it liberty as well as light.

It was not therefore in any hurry of composition that I spake* of Dunstan's successors as disposed to uphold the ascendancy which they had founded upon deceit, by uncommunicated knowledge and unrelenting severity. You are pleased (and in this instance with an urbanity of manner whereof controversial writings afford few examples) to express your surprize that such expressions should have fallen from my pen; "for, were not monasteries," you ask,† "the only schools? and was not knowledge most liberally communicated in them?" Those schools indeed have been of infinite service to mankind;... of such service that their beneficial consequences have far outbalanced all the evil,

* Book of the Church, i. 14. † Page 73.

great as that has been and is, of the institutions with which they were connected... But the secrets of monkery and priestcraft were not taught in them, all the knowledge in mechanics, in optics, in acoustics, by which wonders were performed, nor the daring impiety which scrupled not at employing such means to such an end, and which implies in too many leading spirits of their age a total disbelief of the religion which they professed.

I am not here supposing a confederacy like that of the Illuminés; nor that the Romish Clergy had their mysteries wherein it was disclosed to the initiated that all which the vulgar were taught to believe, was for the vulgar only. Some of your Popes and Cardinals, however, have been greatly belied by each other, if they did not hold the whole of Christianity for a fable... and as much belied by historians of their own communion and their own times, if they did not act as if they thought so. These indeed were monsters of wickedness. But it is not to such men among the Romish Clergy that infidelity is confined; it is not to the dissolute and the daring, those in whom the heart corrupts the understanding, or they who are betrayed by the pride of intellect into errors as gross as the grossest devices of superstition.

Persons of a better mould, who are disposed by nature to sincerity and the virtues connected with it, when they find themselves unawares engaged in a system of deceit, feel that the foundation of their faith is shaken. Mr. Blanco White has shown us that this is no imaginary case. I could tell you too of Priests in a Romish country where they had no Inquisition to fear, whose practice it was to *disabuse*, as they called it, those of their parishioners in whom they had any confidence. You have brought a charge, Sir, of insincerity against the Ministers of the Church of England, which has been repelled by one eminently worthy of the high station in that Church whereto he has been called. Are you as able on your part to rebut the assertion, that in those countries where the Romish religion has most hold upon the people, infidelity is common among the Clergy?... Would it surprize you, Sir, to meet with it at Naples, at Loretto, and in Rome itself? Do you think that none of the Popes have suspected their own infallibility, and the purity of the Church over which they presided? Or that they who grant indulgencies, and they who sell them, have as much faith in the article as those by whom it is purchased?

You are equally astonished at a supposition

that Dunstan's successors would have maintained their power by unrelenting severity. This appears so strange to you that you cannot bring to your recollection even a single fact which supports it; and you declare that, till you perused the Book of the Church, you never found this charge, or any thing like it, made or insinuated. Indeed, Sir! Has history been so silent? Or was there ever such a system of unrelenting severity pursued century after century, as that by which the Romish Church upheld its power, wherever it was opposed, till the Reformation delivered part of Europe from its inhuman and intolerable yoke? By some strange misapprehension you have persuaded yourself that an imputation of cruelty against the Romish priesthood,...that priesthood which preached up the crusade against the Albigenses, and established the Inquisition, ..might be disposed of* by quoting in reply the eulogium of a Protestant historian upon the government of certain ecclesiastical states during the dark ages! an eulogium relating wholly to their policy, and the management of their temporal concerns!

* Page 73.

INVESTITURES.

Concerning the subject of Investitures we appear to differ less in opinion than upon matters of fact. You suppose me to be aware that monarchs had usurped the exclusive right of nominating to vacant sees: whereas the received opinion among* English antiquaries and historians is, that bishoprics were originally donatives, as being of the King's foundation, till they were made elective by Henry I. from whom the right of nomination, which Blackstone† calls "that antient prerogative of the crown," was wrested. The usurpation‡ was

* Gibson's Codex, 104. † Book iv. c. viii.

‡ In a letter which Nicolas Clemangis addressed to Gregory XIII. on his election to the Popedom, this is plainly stated. "The burden with which you are charged," says the honest counsellor, "is so much the heavier because you and your predecessors *have taken upon yourselves many charges from which the Lord and the Church had exempted you. In making yourselves the masters of elections to benefices, of collations, dispensations, and all which was formerly done by the Archdeacons and Patrons,* you have infinitely increased the account which you will have to render. True it is that if you acquit yourself faithfully of your administration, there is no empire upon earth which can approach the glory of your *servitude.* But if you make your dignity subservient to your profit,

on the part of the Popes. A pretext was indeed afforded them by the scandalous sale of benefices, by the unworthy manner in which, when not sold, they were frequently bestowed; and by the practice of keeping sees vacant, that their revenues might be enjoyed by the crown. Having this valid cause for interfering, the Popes carried their interference beyond all reasonable bounds. For their ambition knew no bounds; and I must remind you, Sir, that the same Pope who began the dispute on this point with the Norman Kings, called upon William the Conqueror to do fealty for the Crown of England.

That Pope was the imperious Hildebrand, the firebrand of his age. But according to the Titular Bishop Milner,* "equitable judges, who are possessed of the genuine spirit of Christianity, pronounce that he has acquired glory to himself for time and eternity, by extirpating that system of simony, and that wide-

to pomp, to haughtiness; if you love better to command than to serve, you will become in fact the vilest of all slaves. You will be the servant not of the servants of God, but of cupidity, of avarice, of pride, of ambition, which are the servants of the Devil, in a word, of as many masters as there are vices."—*L'Enfant, Hist. du Concile de Pise*, i. p. 65.

* Page 16.

spreading incontinency which undermined the sanctity of the Church at the time in which he lived." Few authors have ever calculated so confidently on the ignorance of their readers as Dr. Milner. His own erudition indeed is "neither as deep as a well, nor as wide as a church door." But he knows, and cannot but know, that simony was never carried on so openly and scandalously as by the Popes themselves, after they had thus succeeded in their claim to the right of investiture. Instead of extirpating it, they transplanted it to Rome, into their own hot-bed, and it flourished accordingly. All persons who have the slightest acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, know that this was one of the most notorious and crying abuses of the Papal Church till the time of the Reformation. And you, Sir, who affirm that the main* object of the Popes in asserting their claims, was "generally commendable," you yourself are conscious that by succeeding in those claims they increased the evil† which

* Page 78.

† "'Tis incredible," says Paul the Englishman, "how many mischiefs the sale of offices has done to the Church. From thence have proceeded worthless, ignorant, scandalous, ambitious, and violent Bishops. The other benefices have been disposed of to all manner of persons indifferently,... to pimps, cooks,

they pretended to cure... that they acted more like successors of Simon Magus than of Simon Peter.

grooms and boys. Benefices are as publicly sold at Rome as goods in a market. *So much for the Pope's signature: so much for a dispensation, or leave to hold benefices that are incompatible: so much for an indult: so much for taking off an excommunication: so much for such and such indulgencies.*"—L'Enfant, Council of Constance. Eng. Translation. vol. i. 369.

"One might believe that the Sovereign Pontiffs had drawn to themselves these elections and collations for the sake of giving better pastors to the Church. Nothing less than that. Since that time they chose not those who were most capable of instructing and of ruling the Church, but those who were able to pay best: thus the Church found itself filled with ignorant and incapable pastors. This was not sufficient. They took away from patrons the privilege of presenting persons to a benefice, and the liberty of conferring it, threatening these patrons with anathema, if by an audacious rashness they undertook to establish any person whatsoever in a benefice whilst there was any one to whom the Pope had granted by his authority an expectance for it. Graces expectative came in then from all sides. "They do not (says Clemangis) take pastors from the schools or universities, but from the plough and from the most vile professions. We see those who know no more of Latin than of Arabic; some even who scarcely know how to read nor distinguish A from B. There is nothing more unworthy than to see a Pope, or any other ecclesiastic, in an eminent station, not knowing even how to read the Holy Scripture readily, and never touching it but by the cover, although in their installation they are obliged to swear that they have the knowledge of it. If by chance they meet with any pastor of another character, he

CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY.

Pope Hildebrand, according to Dr. Milner, succeeded not only in extirpating simony, but in completely remedying the incontinency of the clergy; and we are to infer that the Romish Church has from that time been immaculate on this score. He was indeed as successful in the one attempt as in the other, and the Romish Church proved itself about as immaculate in morals as it was infallible in doctrine.

It might have been thought that the question concerning the celibacy of the clergy had been set at rest throughout Protestant Europe. You

is exposed to the raillery and the slanders of others, and found only fit to be put in a cloister. Thus the study of the Holy Word passes for folly. Those who make profession of it are the sport of all the world, and particularly of the Popes, who prefer their traditions to the commandments of God. The glorious and holy employ of preaching, which was formerly a privilege particular to Bishops, is so vilified that they are ashamed to exercise it."

Ignorance was yet the least evil. One may judge of the morals of people thus ill brought up. The author makes a frightful picture of it. There was nothing but lewdness, debaucheries, gambling, and quarrels. The utmost contempt was the necessary consequence of such conduct.—*L'Enfant, Hist. du Concile de Pise*, t. i. p. 67.

however suppose* it to be "abundantly demonstrated that Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, were obliged, from the very infancy of the Church, to observe the law of continency;" and that this law "was taught by the Apostles." This bold assertion is made in the teeth of the Apostle Paul, who tells us that a Bishop must be "the husband of one wife,...one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"†...who says, "Let the Deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well;"‡ and who prophetically warned the Church against those who in latter times, "giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," should speak "lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron, *forbidding to marry.*"§...I do not wonder, Sir, that your Church should be so solicitous to withhold the Bible from its people!

A Synod held in this country, and in the eleventh century, ascribed the prohibition of marriage to Christ himself, because, said they, he says in a certain Gospel, "he who hateth not his wife is not worthy to be my disciple."‖

* Page 64. † 1 Tim. iii. 2-4.

‡ 1 Tim. iii. 12. § Ib. c. iv. 1-3.

‖ "*Christus ipse stabilivit Christianismum et castitatem; om-*

The Romish Clergy, when they had a purpose to serve, have sometimes interpolated* Scrip-

nes etiam qui ambulaverint in viâ ejus cum ipso, deserant mundana omnia, uxores non respicientes, quoniam ipse dicebat in aliquo Evangelio, " Qui uxorem suam non odit, non est dignus meus esse discipulus."—*Liber Canonum Ecclesiasticorum, apud Canciani,* t. iv. p. 314.

These same Canons show in what manner the celibacy of the clergy was connected with the mysteries of the mass. The example of the priests under the old law, they say, is not to be admitted:...*bene in illis diebus uxores habere poterant, quoniam nec missam celebrabant, nec Sacram Eucharistiam hominibus dabant; sed sacrificabant animalia veteri modo.*—Ibid. 315.

I leave the Romanists to reconcile the following extract from the same Synod, which expresses the doctrine of the Church of England at this day...with their dogma of transubstantiation.

" *Eucharistia est corpus Christi* NON CORPORALITER SED SPIRITUALITER: NON CORPUS IN QUO PASSUS EST, *sed corpus de quo loquebatur, cùm panem et vinum benediceret ad Eucharistiam, nocte illâ ante passionem suam, et dicebat de benedicto pane,* Hoc est corpus meum; *et deinde de consecrato vino,* Hic est sanguis meus qui pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. *Intelligite ergo, quod si Dominus mutare potuisset panem illum ante passionem suam in corpus suum, et vinum in sanguinem suum* SPIRITUALITER, *quilibet quotidie per manus Sacerdotis panem et vinum benedicat ad* SPIRITUALE *suum corpus et sanguinem.*" —Ibid. p. 317.

* For example, the following passage respecting extreme unction occurs in Lyndwood: " *Effectus enim istius Sacramenti patet ex verbis Apostoli Jacobi, dicentis, Si infirmatur quis ex vobis, inducat Presbyteros Ecclesiæ, et orent super illum, ungentes*

ture as boldly as they still continue to interpret it. These frauds were practised when it had been determined to enforce upon the secular clergy a regulation which they long resisted. The causes which led to a prohibition so expressly condemned by the Apostle have been distinctly traced. In many systems of heathen superstition it was supposed that holiness was connected with celibacy in those who were devoted to the service of the Gods. It was held also in the schools of philosophy that married men were more subject than others to the influence of malignant Dæmons,* for philosophy had then allied itself with the popular superstition, from which, in the better ages

eum Oleo Sancto *in nomine Domini; et oratio fidei salvabit infirmum, et alleviabit eum Dominus: et si in peccatis sit, demittentur ei.*"—Provinciale, p. 36. Ed. 1679.

The flagrant case of the Bourdeaux New Testament will be noticed hereafter. Lanfranc may be suspected of having set a notable example in this way. His biographer, Milo Crispin, says of him ... *quia Scripturæ scriptorum vitio erant nimium corruptæ, omnes tam veteris quàm novi Testamenti libros, nec non etiam scripta sanctorum Patrum,* secundum orthodoxam fidem studuit corrigere.—Acta SS. Mai. t. vi. 846.

Were one of these corrected copies to be discovered, it is not unlikely that the text quoted by the Synod might be found there, ... and perhaps some readings equally bold and novel in favour of transubstantiation.

* Mosheim, i. 218.

of Greece, it had stood apart. The Romish Church gradually accommodated itself to this persuasion, because it had been imbibed by the people. Its Nuns succeeded to that place in public estimation which had been held by the Vestals; and its Clergy, in the observation of perpetual continence, offered to their profession a sacrifice not less meritorious and imposing than that to which the priests of Cybele submitted. These prejudices were strengthened by those notions drawn from the Oriental system of Dualism with which the Gnostics first, and the Manicheans afterwards, leavened the Christian world. A single life, therefore, was held holier than a married one for the clergy, even while their choice was free; and for those who lived in times of persecution, or who were employed in distant and dangerous missions, it was obviously better that they should contract no domestic engagements. But in ordinary seasons, and for the stationary clergy, the fitness lay on the other side; and the most unquestionable authorities show that during several centuries* they were at full liberty to marry.

* This is explicitly admitted by Dr. Lingard (Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 69); and even Dr. Milner has not explicitly denied it (Strictures, p. 14) when he endeavours to make the reader infer that it was otherwise. Examples in abundance might be

But when the portentous tenet of transubstantiation had been introduced by scholastic subtlety, recommended by artificial miracles, and established at length by authority, then it was (in South's* language) that "Satan began to play the white devil, by prohibiting, upon pretence of higher sacerdotal purity, the marriage of the clergy:" and a reason for enjoining celibacy was deduced from this doctrine, which, because it partakes equally of impurity and impiety, it is better to allude to than to repeat. By that time, indeed, the system of the Romish Church was

> "So mixt with power and craft in every part,
> That any shape but Truth might enter there."

The excellent Sir Henry Wotton† has re-

adduced from Gregorius Turonensis, ... in one place he relates a stratagem by which the wife of a priest obtained a bishopric for her husband. (p. 116. Ed. 1561.) The ancient canons are full of regulations concerning the widows and children of the clergy. There is one by which no man could be ordained if his wife had been taken in adultery; and by which it is declared that if she commits the crime after his ordination, he must repudiate her, or, if he continue to live with her, be suspended from the ministry. (*S. Martini Bracarensis Canones*, p. 116. Can. 28. Ed. Lisbon, 1803.)

* Vol. iii. p. 463. Ed. 1823.

† Some Etonian should give us a careful edition of the remains of this excellent person, who deserved to have Izaak Walton for his biographer. It is very possible that more of his letters might be recovered.

corded a saying of Sir Edmund Bacon, that "Nature,* if she be well studied, is the best moralist, and hath much good counsel hidden in her bosom." To the same effect it is said by the profound Poet† whom I have just quoted,

> "Forsake not Nature, nor misunderstand her!
> Her mysteries are read without Faith's eye-sight;
> She speaketh in our flesh, and from our senses
> Delivers down her wisdomes to our reason."

Indeed one proof of Christianity (and a convincing one it is) is deduced from its perfect adaptation to human nature, and its accordance with the best affections of the human heart. It requires the governance of unruly desires, not the suppression of the domestic charities,.. the sacrifice, not of our virtues, but of our vices. There are times and circumstances when it may be necessary to forsake "brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, for the Gospel's sake;" but this can only be in extraordinary times and circumstances, and then it may be well believed that He

> "Who gives the burthen, gives the strength to bear."

Christianity calls for no such sacrifice in the

* Remains, p. 77. Ed. 1685. † Lord Brooke.

regular course of things, either from priests or people; and wherever the sacrifice of natural affections, or the disruption of natural ties is enjoined, the injunction which thus offers violence to our nature is opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

None of your writers, Sir, have treated the question of clerical celibacy with more dexterity than Dr. Lingard. Let us take the fair side, as he has represented it, and then examine how far his representations are warranted by experience. "If it be granted," says he,* "that the clerical functions are of high importance to the welfare of the state, it must also be acknowledged that in the discharge of these functions the unmarried possesses great and numerous advantages over the married clergyman. Unincumbered with the cares of a family, he may dedicate his whole attention to the spiritual improvement of his parishioners: free from all anxiety respecting the future establishment of his children, he may expend without scruple the superfluity of his revenue in relieving the distresses of the sick, the aged, and the unfortunate. Had Augustine and his associates been involved in the embarrassments

* Anglo-Saxon Church, 75—77.

of marriage, they would never have torn themselves from their homes and country, and have devoted the best portion of their lives to the conversion of distant and unknown barbarians. Had their successors seen themselves, surrounded with numerous families, they would never have founded those charitable establishments, nor have erected those religious edifices that testify the use to which they devoted their riches, and still exist to reproach the parsimony of succeeding generations. But it is not from the impolicy of the institution that the Reformers attempted to justify the eagerness with which they emancipated themselves from the yoke. They contended that the law of clerical celibacy was unjust, because it deprived man of his natural rights, and exacted privations incompatible with his natural propensities. To this objection a rational answer was returned, that to accept the priestly character was a matter of election not of necessity; and that he who freely made it the object of his choice, chose at the same time the obligations annexed to it. The insinuation that a life of continency was above the power of man was treated with the contempt which it deserved. To those indeed whom habit had rendered the obse-

quious slaves of their passions, it might appear with reason too arduous an attempt: but the thinking part of mankind would hesitate before they sanctioned an opinion which was a libel on the character of thousands, who in every department of society are confined by their circumstances to a state of temporary or perpetual celibacy."

Audi alteram partem. The argument of the Reformers was, that the law of clerical celibacy is in direct contradiction to the explicit words of Scripture. They did not think so unworthily of human nature as to suppose that a life of continence is impossible; but they saw the frightful consequences of requiring from a whole body of men, by an inflexible law, that which ought to be with every individual a matter of choice and prudence. And when they perceived that some among the Princes who favoured the reformation, inclined to continue this most injurious law, either because their minds were not wholly emancipated from superstition or prejudice, or from an opinion that they who had no private cares to divide their thoughts would better discharge their professional duties, ..men so conspicuous in their age and station as Peter Martyr and Cranmer

and Parker might, with good reason, think it fitting, were it only for example's sake, to exercise in this point their christian liberty.

The advantages to the common weal of having a celibate clergy are not found to be in fact what they might appear in speculation. When I remind you, Sir, of the emphatic word *nepotism*, you must acknowledge that celibacy has not preserved the Romish churchmen from the sin of misemploying the revenues of the Church to enrich their friends and kindred. Instances of this sin have not been frequent among the few of our clergy who have had the opportunity of committing it. I may safely affirm, Sir, that it has been far more common in Rome than in England. But a sin it is. It is the duty of our clergy, like other men, to make a competent provision for their children, when it is in their power: if they go beyond this, and heap up riches for them, they are preparing for themselves uneasy thoughts at their latter end, and an ill report which will survive them. A good old Socinian minister, whom I knew in my youth, used to say, when he heard of any person who left a great accumulation of wealth, that he died *wickedly* rich. Of all such persons this may be said

truly, but of none so emphatically as of churchmen.

But never perhaps was the English Church more free from such reproach than at this time, nor has the spirit of religious munificence ever at any time been more diffused among us. It has kept pace with the increase of national wealth, great as that increase has been. We have seen the example of the legislature seconded by individual liberality. Churches have been built and endowed, Colleges enlarged in their extent, and augmented in their revenues. And whenever government may think proper to erect a third University, .. (not in conformity with the designs of men who have no other object so much at heart as the overthrow of our existing institutions; but in compliance with the wants and wishes of a loyal and protestant people; upon the right foundation, for the preservation of sound and orthodox learning, ... for training up youth in the way that they should go, ... in the constitutional principles of Church and State .. the principles of our fathers, ... the true English principles,) ... whenever this great and needful measure shall be resolved on, neither the clergy nor the lay-members of the Church of England will be found backward in contributing toward

so good a work. Of all nations the imputation of parsimony in religious or charitable undertakings is least applicable to the English, and of all times to our own.

Before we proceed to consider this question in its most important bearing, it will be proper to notice what Dr. Lingard* has quoted from Lord Bacon in support of his argument for the celibacy of the clergy: "He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, for they are impediments to great enterprises either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of the greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or the childless man, which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public." Thus far he has quoted, ... and he has not quoted what follows: "yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges." The Roman Catholic historian tells us again, in Bacon's words, that "unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants,"... and he omits what follows: "*but not always best subjects.*" He quotes the convenient sen-

* Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 76.

tence, " a single life doth well with churchmen; for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool:" and he does not continue with the great author, who proceeds to say, " it is indifferent for judges and magistrates, for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly in their hortatives put men in mind of their wives and children. And I think the despising of marriage among the Turks maketh the vulgar soldiers more base. *Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity:* and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust; yet on the other side, *they are more cruel and hard-hearted* (GOOD TO MAKE SEVERE INQUISITORS)* because their tenderness is not so oft called upon." Thus, Sir, the Essay to which Dr. Lingard refers for an opinion of the very highest authority in favour of the celibacy of the clergy, points out thus expressly two of the strong and insuperable objections against it.

It was not till the great scheme of Papal ambition was developed that this celibacy was rigorously enforced. Then indeed it became

* Bacon's Essays, viii. p. 36—38. Edit. 1639.

a part of that scheme to enforce it, and a necessary part. Nor can it be doubted that the consequences at which Bacon has pointed were intended as well as foreseen. When the claim of temporal supremacy was advanced for the Pope as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to whom, as Vice-God, the rule of the whole world belonged, and every creature owed obedience,...such a claim could at no time have been supported unless the clergy had every where been taught to disregard their natural allegiance, and prefer their order to their country whenever any contention arose between the Sovereign and the Bishop of Rome. It was for the interest of Rome to educate such subjects as the Saints Dunstan and Becket, as the propagandists of treason Cardinal Allen and Father Persons, and as the missionaries who went forth from their seminaries to plot against the life of the sovereign and the security of the state. The policy of Rome required such subjects. And when the spirit of religious inquiry, which never could be totally suppressed, was to be kept down by a persecution exceeding in extent and cruelty those of all the Heathen Emperors,...when Inquisitors were to accompany the armies of

the faith, for the purpose of completing by fire the work of extirpation which the sword had begun,... and when Holy Offices were to be established for hunting down Jews and heretics, and delivering them over to the secular arm, then indeed the Romish Church required for its ministers men who had been excluded from the "*discipline of humanity*," whose cords of sympathy with their fellow-creatures had been cut and seared, and who, by shutting the heart against all natural affections, had (in the emphatic idiom of the Prophet) "corrupted their compassions." Thus far the object was completely attained. The men who were enlisted in the ranks of the Romish Church renounced their national character as effectually in deed as they explicitly in word renounced their individual will when they entered into any of the monastic orders. They were no longer English, French, Germans, Spaniards, or Italians, but Churchmen. And whether Benedictines or Augustinians, Franciscans or Dominicans, Carmelites or Jesuits; however mutually inimical and envious, they were Churchmen still. Their sympathy was with each other, not with their country, nor with their kind. And the Court of Rome had by this means its em-

bodied and trained and sworn supporters, ready for any service wherein it might think proper to employ them.

Such were the political effects of compelling the clergy to celibacy, and thereby separating them from the other classes of society. It was necessary for the papal system that they should be insulated among their fellow countrymen and their fellow creatures; and that remorseless Church was regardless of all other consequences. A wide spreading immorality was the inevitable result. Upon this point we may appeal to popular opinion, being one of the few points on which it may be trusted. Before the Reformation the clergy in this country were as much the subjects of ribald tales and jests for the looseness of their lives, as they were in all other Roman Catholic countries, and still are in those wherever any freedom of speech can be indulged. Wherever the Reformation was established this reproach has been done away. Amid all the efforts which are made to bring the Church of England into contempt and hatred, there is no attempt to revive it. The general decorum and respectability of the clergy as a body of men is so well known and undeniable, that even slander and faction have not assailed them on that score.

Your advocate represents the obligation of celibacy upon your clergy as no injustice, because, he says, it "is a matter of election, not of necessity; and they who make choice of the clerical profession chuse at the same time the conditions annexed to it." But what a mockery is it to represent men as actually free, or as competent to exercise their freedom, at the age when they are permitted to make this election, and fasten upon themselves the fetters of their order! Even if they were not destinated to their profession from childhood, and so educated for it as to be unprepared for any other at the critical time when they are launched into the world;..even if the choice were not thus directly or indirectly made for them when they are incapable of chusing,..ask your own heart, Sir, whether a youth at one-and-twenty can be sufficiently acquainted with his, not to be in danger of committing a fatal error on this point? In the first fervour of youthful piety, fostered and incited by circumstances also as it then is, the engagement wherein he binds himself appears as light as the gossamer thread of the sorceress, when Thalaba twined it round his hands, unsuspicious of the spell. It is not till he is in the snare that he becomes sensible of its nature; then indeed he is a prisoner, and

a hopeless one, and the iron enters into his soul.

Do not mistake me, Sir. Let others misrepresent me as they may, and will in their vocation; but let me not be misunderstood by you. That there are many ministers of your church who conform faithfully, as well as apparently, to this obligation, I do not doubt; but these are persons who would have kept the same course, if left to their own free choice. For them the obligation is not required; upon others it acts, and must act, like a besetting sin.

Very many of our own clergy are unmarried. That their lives are in every instance irreproachable it would be folly to assert: that they are very generally so is evinced by the scandal which any instance of immorality among them never fails to excite. More of them continue single from prudential considerations than from choice; and if there are not a few who, under expectant engagements, are cherishing that hope which "maketh the heart sick," (though such engagements soften the heart more frequently than they sour it,) better is it even for ourselves to bear about a wounded heart than a hardened one. Hope delayed or frustrated...disappointment...bereavement...are less to be deprecated than

that abnegation of natural* affections which the Church of Rome requires from its priesthood.

For that abnegation tends as much to corrupt the heart as to harden it. You, Sir, have lived in habits of social intercourse with clergy of the English Church; you know what their character is as a body; and though, in an unlucky hour, you advanced an insinuation against them which your better mind has disowned, you are neither insensible of their worth, nor ignorant of the estimation in which they are held. Did you never, Sir, compare in your

* Colet's opinions upon this subject, as preserved by Erasmus, deserve to be considered by those Romanists who are persuaded that their church acts wisely in imposing celibacy upon its priesthood. "*Dictitare solet se nusquam reperire minus corruptos mores quàm inter conjugatos; quod hos, affectus naturæ, cura liberorum, ac res familiaris ita veluti cancellis quibusdam distringerent, ut non possint in omne flagitii genus prolabi. Cum ipse castissimè viveret, tamen inter illaudatos, minus erat iniquus his, qui tametsi sacerdotes, aut etiam monachi, venere duntaxat peccarent: non quod impudicitiæ vitium non detestaretur, sed quod hos experiretur multo minus malos, quoties eos cum aliis conferret, qui cum essent elatis animis, invidi, maledici, obtrectatores, fucati, vani, indocti, toto pectore pecuniæ et ambitioni dediti, tamen sibi magnum quiddam esse viderentur, cum alteros infirmitas agnita redderet humiliores ac modestiores. Aiebat magis execrandam in sacerdote avaritiam et superbiam, quàm si centum haberet concubinas. Ne vero quisquam hæc huc rapiat, ut putet leve crimen esse in sacerdote aut monacho libidinem; sed ut intelligat alterum genus longius abesse a verâ pietate.*"—Epist. L. 15. Ep. 14. 706. Ed. 1642.

mind the terms upon which our clergy mingle in society, with the situation in which the Romish priests are placed? The quiet, unassuming, unclaimed influence of the one may appear to you less than it ought to be, as the authority and interference of the other must be deemed intolerable by every husband and father who has not, from earliest youth, been broken in to bear it. But you cannot, I think, have felt the same satisfaction in contrasting the safe freedom, the unsuspicious intercourse which the English clergyman enjoys among his parishioners, with the jealous and uneasy position of one for whom it has been made criminal to indulge the most natural affections, and who is therefore called upon by his church to suspect himself, even when he is not suspected by others.

I know not upon what class of readers Dr. Milner can impose when he asserts that Pope Hildebrand succeeded in extirpating the incontinence of the clergy; certainly not upon any who have the slightest acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, or the slightest knowledge of the human mind. "*Etiamnè putat idem esse cœlibem et castum?*"* If that Pontiff, indeed, when he enforced the obligation of celibacy, had

* Erasmi Epist. 1417.

conferred the gift of continence, this might have been said: but even the omnipotence which he affected did not extend so far; and though humanity may be perverted and degraded by evil institutions, it can never be totally changed by them. The law was resisted in those countries where political circumstances precluded the Romish Church from exercising its full power. In Bohemia, this resistance was one of the causes which prepared the people for Wicliffe's doctrine, when Hus was raised up as the precursor of Luther.* In Spain, the clergy continued to marry long after the extirpation of the Albigenses, who derived from that country a main part of their strength; and their marriages were not merely tolerated, but recognized by the ecclesiastical laws.† In other kingdoms, where the triumph of the Regulars over the Secular Clergy, and of the Papal See over the National Church, was more complete; the priests, being deterred from marrying, lived in concubinage, which was either open or secret, according to the views of the Monarch, or the temper of the Primate. This was the case in England. Sometimes those who were in authority enacted laws of the severest kind;

* Lenfant, C. de Basle, t. i. 13.

† Lenfant, C. de Pise, xxvii.

sometimes they were contented with requiring that no public scandal* should be given: and Henry I., taking upon himself what may be called the Popely privilege of selling indulgences, allowed his clergy to retain their wives, upon payment of an annual tax,† in defiance of the ecclesiastical laws. Need I remind you what the consequences were when the steady and unrelenting policy of the Papal Court effected its object, and the clergy, not being allowed to contract the sacred and indissoluble tie of marriage, learnt to disregard the moral obligation which, under their circumstances, while it was observed, gave something like the sanction of conscience to concubinage? That sanction was effectually broken down by enactments‡ annulling all settlements upon the women with whom they were thus connected, or their children, and declaring that all bequests made to such persons should be forfeited to the

* *Clerici beneficiati, aut in sacris ordinibus constituti, in hospitiis suis publicè tenere Concubinas non audeant, nec etiam alibi cum scandalo accessum publicum habeant ad eas.*—Lyndwood, l. iii. tit. ii. p. 126.

There is a long gloss upon this canon to explain away the sense which the words obviously bear, and in which they would certainly be taken.

† Lyttleton's Henry II. i. 153. Ed. 1769.

‡ Lyndwood, l. iii. tit. xii. pp. 165, 166.

Church. The women themselves were to forfeit their freedom and become slaves* to the Bishop of the diocese; and a canon was passed in a Synod at Pavia, by which the children of the clergy, whatever their mothers might have been, were declared† slaves of the Church, and any judge who should pass sentence in favour of their liberty was anathematized. Then, indeed, when it was rendered impossible for the priest to discharge his duty towards the woman who had been the faithful partner of his life, and towards their children; and when, in consequence, women who had any worth were deterred, by the prospect of want and infamy, or of slavery for themselves and their offspring, from entering into such connections, the sure effect of these iniquitous and anti-christian laws was manifested in the reckless profligacy of the priesthood. For the heart of man never lies idle. If the domestic charities are not cultivated there, vices will spring up, like thorns and thistles in a neglected field. The state of clerical morals, as you, Sir, cannot but know, became to the last degree infamous from the time when Dr. Milner has the hardihood to

* Henry, vol. iii. 203.—Dublin Edition.

† Bernino, t. iii. p. 9.—Ditmarus is the authority to which he refers. There is a law to the same effect in the Partidas, Part iv. tit. xxi. ley 3.

assert that the incontinence of the clergy was extirpated! It had not been amended when the Council of Constance was held, and was not amended till the Reformation. At that crisis fear and danger and policy, and the zeal which is always exerted by party-spirit, united to effect what the Council of Trent, like those of Pisa and Constance and Basil, would otherwise only have talked of effecting. A check was given to that open and audacious profligacy against which Hus did not lift up a louder voice than the most eminent of those cardinals and prelates who concurred in the guilt of his martyrdom. But the root of the evil was left, because the influential men, who perceived where it lay, dared not attempt the only effectual remedy.

Gregory the Great is said to have been the first Pope who imposed this law upon the clergy,* and when he perceived its injurious effects, he revoked the prohibition. His successors renewed and enforced it, because the consolidation of their own power was with

* Lenfant, C. of Constance, ii. 359.—A letter from Ulric Bishop of Augsburg to Pope Nicholas I. is Lenfant's authority, and he refers for it to the Casauboniana, 302. A doubtful authority ascribes the first injunction of celibacy to Pope Siricius in the latter part of the fourth century.—Venema, Hist. Eccles. Christ. t. iv. § 177. p. 190.

them paramount to all other considerations. You remember, Sir, the saying of Æneas Sylvius, that if there had formerly been good reasons for prohibiting the marriage of the clergy, there were now stronger ones for allowing it. It is a passage which Onuphrius suppressed in his edition of Platina's Lives of the Popes,* when that work was mutilated, as so many others have been, to make it suit the policy of the Romish Church. This was one of the opinions which that Pius Æneas changed upon his elevation to the Papacy. He then saw how expedient it was for the Court of Rome to favour the Monastic Orders, as its surest supporters, and therefore may have thought it dangerous to offend them upon a point which would certainly have armed them against him. But though he thus learnt to consider the prohibition as politic, his clear perception of its effects upon the character of the clergy could not have been changed. Their character was such that Cardinal Zabarella, who bore so conspicuous a part in the Council of Florence,† said it would be better to repeal the prohibition than to tolerate its consequences. What those consequences have been in the most catholic

* Lenfant, C. de Pise, i. 24.

† Lenfant, C. of Constance, ii. 327. 359.

country in Europe, a country where no open scandal was tolerated, and where the Holy Office was ready, in aid of ecclesiastical discipline, to take cognizance of the morals of the clergy, we know from that Practical and Internal Evidence against the Romish system which Mr. Blanco White has laid before the world. Better service has seldom been rendered to the Protestant cause than by that most valuable and seasonable work.

These consequences were not unforeseen, and therefore the introduction of the injurious restriction was so long withstood. When, at the Council of Nice, it was proposed that the married clergy should no longer be allowed to cohabit with their wives, the Egyptian Bishop, Paphnutius protested against imposing an obligation which it was certain that all could not observe, and which they could not endeavour to enforce without great injury to religion. Even the persons who made this unwise proposal yielded to the earnest and unanswerable reasoning of a prelate not more eminent for his sufferings in time of persecution, than for the unimpeached purity of his life; and the whole council* unanimously determined that the

* Bingham, i. 5. § 7. Socrates Scholasticus. Hanmer's Translation, p. 232.

clergy should be left at liberty,* as they had always been. Eustathius was anathematized by the Council of Gangra, because he taught that men ought to separate from those priests who retained the wives whom they had married while they were laymen.† The Council of Ancyra permitted deacons to marry after‡ ordination; and in St. Jerome's days there were Bishops who would not ordain any unmarried man. Jerome states this with horror§ in a

* Bellarmine is so perplexed by this inconvenient story, that he can find no better means of evading its force than by chusing to disbelieve it. In this he has been followed by Valesius in his notes upon this historian. A writer of the same communion, but of a different spirit, observes upon this: "*Quelques-uns doutent de la vérité de cette histoire. Je crois qu'ils le font plutôt dans la crainte qu'ils ont, que ce fait ne donne quelque atteinte à la discipline d'à présent, que parce qu'ils en aient quelque preuve solide.*"—Du Pin, t. ii, 318. Ed. 1690.—Bingham, *ut supra*.

† Bingham, i. 5. § 8.

‡ Ibid.

§ "*Pro nefas, episcopos sui sceleris dicitur habere consortes: si tamen episcopi nominandi sunt, qui non ordinant diaconos nisi prius uxores duxerint, nulli cœlibi credentes pudicitiam: immo ostendentes quod sanctè vivant qui malè de omnibus suspicantur: et nisi preghantes uxores viderint clericorum, infantesque de ulnis matrum vagientes, Christi sacramenta non tribuunt.*"—Tractatus in Vigilantium.

Before the Reformation, it was the custom in many of the Swiss Cantons, that whensoever they received a new Pastor, they obliged him to take a concubine, for the sake of preserv-

Treatise, where he appears as little to advantage for wisdom as for wit and command of temper: but we learn from that Treatise that in the fifth century a testimony was borne against this demoralizing prohibition, against the worship of Saints and relics, and against offering prayers for the dead; and your Jerome (for Jerome of Prague is *ours*) is one of the witnesses by whom we prove that the corruptions of the Romish Church were opposed step by step* in their progress; and that in every age there were some who in the spirit of truth protested against them.

That the apostolical doctrine has been preserved throughout all ages, even when that which calls itself the Universal and Apostolical Church was most corrupted, is a point rather of curiosity than of importance. The question "Where was our religion before Luther?" is best answered as Sir Henry Wotton† answered it; "it was to be found then where yours is not to be found now, in the written word of God."‡ This reply, which is as irrefragable as that word

ing the honour of their own families.—Sleidan. Comment. lib. iii. quoted by Henry Wharton. Preservative against Popery, vol. i. 337.

* Allix's Remarks on the Albigenses, p. 22. 24.

† Izaak Walton's Life of Wotton.

‡ The question was propounded playfully by a friendly priest, to whom even in that age, and at Rome, such a reply might be

itself, might suffice, even if the apostolical succession were not matter of history as far as history extends, (which it has been proved to be,) and of the highest probability when no direct proof can be adduced, because the records fail. It would not be difficult to establish a point of more importance, that as the Romish Church incorporated many of the ceremonies and superstitions of heathen idolatry, so it adopted from the old heresies, which it anathematized and subdued, such opinions as were conformable to its own views, and amalgamated them with its own corruptions. These errors usually became more malignant in their new type. Thus the Pelagian doctrine concerning the efficacy of good works, led to the most flagrant absurdities when it was engrafted upon monkery; and finally produced a received opinion in the Romish Church, analogous to the Hindoo tenet, that acts of devotion have in themselves an inherent and positive value in no degree dependent upon the motive which prompts them, or the mood in which they are performed: But even the fabricators of the Brahminical fables did not deduce from this such monstrous doctrines as the Romanists,

made safely. I forget who it was that answered the same question as pithily, but more bluntly, by asking in reply, "Where was your face before it was washed?"

who inferred that such works were transferable by gift or purchase, and succeeded in persuading the rich that their property might be converted into post-obits for their own benefit, payable to themselves in the other world! Thus too the celibacy of the clergy was a part of the Manichean system;* and the preposterous notions which produced what may truly be called *bella plusquam civilia* between the Saints and their own bodies, are traceable to the same source.

Before celibacy was enjoined to the clergy, but when it was extolled as a virtue in them, and considered as one means for obtaining the respect of a people not yet weaned from the prejudices of their Pagan faith, there were priests who devised a curious mode of exercising and manifesting their gift of continence. They cohabited with women who had taken a vow of perpetual chastity,† and received them as their companions, to bed and board, under the most solemn professions that nothing but what was pure and holy‡ passed between them in this intercourse. But although sundry Saints obtained their reputation for sanctity by living

* Beausobre, t. ii. 483-486.

† Mosheim, ii. 218. Henry Wharton's Treatise on the Celibacy of the Clergy, in the Preservative against Popery, vol. i. p. 308.

‡ Venema, iv. § 178. p. 191.

upon these terms with their wives, the Bishops did not rely upon such professions, and succeeded at length, with the aid of the civil power, after many efforts, in abolishing this impudent practice.

Such a custom indeed was not more reprehensible in itself than it was inconsistent with that fear and jealousy of all intercourse with females which the Romish Church inculcates upon its clergy. By the African canons no Clergyman, not even a Bishop, might visit the widows and virgins,* unless with proper companions, who were to be present during the interview. There is an English canon which enacts that when the priest hears a woman confess, it should always be in a situation where they might be seen.† And even with this precaution it has been enjoined that the woman should place herself beside him, and not in front, in order that he might hear her, but not see her face,‡ becaue the prophet Habakkuk §

* Canones Ecc. Africanæ, p. 118.

† Lyndwood, p. 342.

‡ Partidas, part i. tit. iv. l. xxvi.

§ An English Protestant need not be told that the Prophet Habakkuk is speaking, not of women, but of the Chaldeans, who were to execute a fearful vengeance upon the Jews. It is thus, however, that he is quoted, not only in the text of the Partidas, but by no less a person than Hostiensis!

says that the face of a woman shall sup up as the east wind.

The tendency of such a system was, by its exaggerated pretensions of purity, to excite and stimulate the very propensities which it proscribed. There are abundant examples which shew that this inevitable consequence was produced. Pope St. Gregory the Great in his Dialogues* tells us of a priest named Ursinus, who, after he had taken orders, though he loved his wife as a sister, never permitted her to come near him upon any occasion, but abstained wholly from all intercourse with her. Forty years after his ordination, during all which time he had never relaxed this rigorous determination, he was brought to the last extremity by disease; and his wife, seeing him lie in a state of such exhaustion that it was doubtful whether he had expired or not, put her head near him to see whether he were still breathing. He had life enough remaining to perceive this, "and in great fervour of spirit broke out into these words, Get thee away, woman! a little fire is yet left! away with the straw!"† This is

* Book iv. ch. xi. Eng. trans. 1608. p. 379.

† Bernino repeats this edifying story, writing in the year 1705, and concludes it thus: "*rimunerò il Cielo sì bell' esempio di continenza con scender giù tutto a ricever come in triunfo la nobil anima dell' agonizzante Sacerdote.*"

one of the stories; in that curious but truly valuable compilation of falsehoods, which may very probably be true. There is a tale related of Leo I., which, though palpably and ridiculously false, is not less to the purpose.* A woman, it is said, once kissed his hand, and he was so inflamed by the act, that, to punish himself, and prevent worse consequences, he cut the hand off!

This was lamentably experiencing the truth of a saying which is ascribed to St. Augustine: *malum est mulierem videre, pejus alloqui, pessimum tangere.* Hildebrand himself was reminded of it also by having the gift of tears so entirely withheld from him, that he could not shed them in his prayers. It might have been difficult for him to discover the cause of this dryness, (the mystical term may in this case be employed with strict propriety,) if the Virgin Mary herself had not informed him that she had thought proper in this manner to manifest her displeasure, and for what offence: One day when he was very ill his niece had come to visit him; she was greatly distressed at seeing him in such a state of suffering, and he, affecting cheerfulness for the sake of raising her spirits by diverting her attention, had taken hold

* Sabinus, l. v.; quoted by Rodulphus. Hist. Serap. Rel. p. 22.

of her necklace, and asked her if she would like to be married.* *Hinc admonemur*, says his biographer, *illius dicti, bonum est homini mulierem non tangere.*

It is a maxim of Barclay's that *ingentibus vitiis magnæ virtutes parum absunt.*† The opinion is to the full as dangerous as it may seem charitable; and we may say with more truth as well as safety, that when any virtue is carried beyond the bounds of discretion, it ceases to be virtue, and becomes either a weakness, or a folly, or a vice. There are men whose favourite theory is, that the scale of morality must be graduated according to degrees of latitude. While these persons adhere to a system of philosophy as degrading as it is fallacious, it is impossible that they can judge wisely or worthily of human nature. But if they were better acquainted with the history of man, they would learn that his character is every where stamped by institutions, and that moral circumstances are far more influential than physical ones in modifying it. Difference of climate will not explain the difference of morals in Great Britain and in Italy. The difference of religion will. To represent that virtue which is of all others the most requisite for the happi-

* Acta SS. Mai. t. vi. 118.

† Euphormio, p. 103. Ed. 1637.

ness of private families and the good of society, as so difficult that Saints themselves have not been able to observe it, without special efforts and special grace, is not the likeliest mode of promoting it among the people. Yet this is done in those countries where celibacy is required from the whole body of the clergy, and where women are constrained to it by irrevocable vows. The difficulty and the merit of this species of self-restraint are alike exaggerated. It is spoken of as the virtue of virtues, which the Apostle Paul* set above all others, and therefore especially dignified by the name of sanctification. And they who have palmed their monkish fables upon the world for revelations, declare it to be so peculiarly acceptable in the sight of the Creator, that married

* "...*ut cuncta præteream quæ in Sanctis Scripturis ob laudem virtutis hujus inserta sunt,..unam tantummodo ponam beati Pauli Apostoli sententiam, quâ pateat qualiter illam, Thessalonicensibus scribens, virtutibus prætulerit universis, tali eam verbi nobilitate commendans. Hæc est, inquit, voluntas Dei, sanctificatio vestra. Et ne fortè dubium nobis relinqueret, vel obscurum, quidnam sanctificationem voluerit appellare, utrum justitiam, an caritatem, an humilitatem, an patientiam (in omnibus enim istis virtutibus creditur acquiri sanctificatio;) infert et manifestò designat quod propriè sanctificationem voluerit appellare.*"—Cassian. De Cœnob. Inst. l. vi. c. xiv. xv. pp. 114, 115. Lipsiæ, 1733.

persons, however excellent their conduct in all the relations of life, can only hope to attain the lowest place* in the kingdom of Heaven.'

* This was revealed to the blessed Verónica of Binasco, when our Saviour showed her the Saints in bliss. *Oranti Veronicæ pro cœnobii sui cunctis Sororibus, ac corporeis solutæ sensibus, dixit aliquando Christus; felicitatem quam Sororibus tui monasterii, ceterisve electis meis dare statui, tibi nunc palam efficere volo! Innumerabiles Sanctorum beatitudines se conspexisse Veronica asseruit, quarum potiores erant illæ quas Ecclesiæ Sanctæ Dei Pastoribus idem ipse Deus largiri disposuerat. Aiebat quoque Christus Sacerdotes vocitans* Christos, *sanctimoniales vero* Christas, *quæ nomina, juxta veterum Doctorum morem, omnibus divinâ gratiâ præditis convenire possunt: majores ego ceteris beatitudines Christis meis virginitate pollentibus disposui, minores vero feminis. Mihi profecto quàm gratissimi existunt Christi mei virginitate decori! quos ita amo, ut,* etiamsi crimen quodpiam commiserint quantumlibet grave, eos custodire proposuerim à labiis iniquis et à linguâ dolosâ? *Veh autem illis, qui Christos meos sive in occulto, sive palam sagittabunt; nam destruam eos, et evellam de terrâ.*

Vidit quoque Virgo dispares beatitudines, &c... *Quam vero conjugati habituri sint gloriam, minorem ceteris omnibus asseruit.*— Acta SS. Jan. t. i. p. 903.

The last labour which Geddes undertook was to translate the Portugueze life of this Saint by F. Joam Freire, as a legend written "with a design to support the authority of the Church of Rome against all that was done by the Reformers to shake it; there not being a doctrine or usage in that corrupt Church condemned by the Reformers that in this legend is not said to have had its truth and lawfulness confirmed by the infallible testimony of a heavenly vision."

This legend, which the *Definidor* in Portugal licensed as

But then the difficulty of acquiring a higher seat! Even in Mr. Alban Butler's volumes, pruned, and trimmed, and qualified, and softened down, and varnished, as every legend is in passing through his hands, we read of Saints who resorted to such refrigerants as the ice bath and the bed of snow. St. Benedict and the Seraphic St. Francis, personages of the highest order in the hagiarchy, found it necessary to prescribe for themselves a roll among the briars,

a book that ought to be printed, because it had been inspected and reinspected by Angels, and approved by God, *(ja visto e revisto pellos Anjos, e aprovado por Dios,)* was not the fabrication of a dark age, nor was it brought forth in a corner. Veronica was born in 1445, and died at Milan, in 1497, where, only twenty years after her death, upon the ground of this legend, Leo X., by a Bull, permitted her to be honoured, venerated, and adored, at the special request of Francis I. On the part of Francis this was a profligate device for making himself popular at Milan,...on the part of the Pope, a profligate subserviency to the views of the French King. The legend had been dedicated to Francis and his Queen by F. Isidorus de Isolanis, who had probably no small share in fabricating it. The dedication, which is dated on Michaelmas day, 1517, alludes to the French King's victories in Italy, and concludes thus: *accipite igitur Regis Christianæ Reipublicæ lumine diva Virginea gesta, Veronicamque* virginem incognitæ mortalibus sanctitudinis, *numinibus vestris tutelaribus annumerate.* Francis lost no time in applying to Rome through his ambassador the Bishop of St. Malo, and on the fifteenth of December, the obsequious Pope expedited his bull *sub annulo Piscatoris.*

which was successful in both cases, and in that of the latter produced the most miraculous and splendid consequences. St. Arduin* obtained the desired effect by rolling in full undress among the nettles. The Cherubic St. Dominic, finding himself unable to support a single combat, retired into a wood, stript, lay down, and called upon the ants and the wasps for aid; and even against these auxiliaries the flesh maintained a three hours contest before he came off victorious;† after which he not only became, for the rest of his life, as "chaste as ice," but physically also fire-proof. The holy Equitius,‡ and the equally holy Helias,§ and the not less holy Methodius,‖ had that operation performed upon them by Angels in a dream which Origen and Ambrosio Morales, in the ardour of their zeal, performed upon themselves. The like favour was conferred upon the holy Abbot Serenus, who became more serene in consequence; and the miracle was wrought upon

* Bulzius. Lararium Poeticum, pars ii. p. 112.

† Vida de S. Domingo, por el M. R. P. Fr. Francisco de Possadas, l. ii. c. iv. §§ 9—14. Possadas gives a full description of the combat.

‡ S. Gregory's Dialogues, book i. chap. iv.

§ Zuinger. Theatrum Humanæ Vitæ, p. 2252, 2256.

‖ Ibid, 2254.

him in a manner inexplicable* to anatomists. Raynald, Dean of Orleans, and afterwards a disciple of Dominic, was twice anointed by the Virgin Mary's own hand (the second time in the presence of Dominic and of another Religioner) with an unguent,† which saved him from any after-temptation to sin against one of his vows. The great St. Thomas (not the Apostle, who is a very insignificant person among the Romanists, compared to the angelical Doctor of Aquino) was girt by two Angels with that girdle wherewith St. Peter Damian‡

* *Adveniens ad eum Angelus in visione nocturnâ, ejusque velut aperiens uterum, quandam ignitam carnis strumam de ejus visceribus avellens, ac projiciens, suisque omnia, ut fuerant, locis intestina restituens, Ecce, inquit, incentiva carnis tuæ abscissa sunt, et obtinuisse te noveris hodiernâ die perpetuam corporis puritatem, quam fideliter poposcisti.*—Cassian. Collat. col. vii. c. ii. p. 310.

† Acta SS. Aug. t. i. p. 582. I wish it were possible for every reader to examine the authorities which I refer to. Without such proof, any conception which they can form of the impiety and wickedness of this prodigious system of imposture must fall short of the reality.

‡ This *Petrus Peccator*, as he calls himself in the superscription, begins a letter to Pope Nicolas II. thus: *Nuper habens cum nonnullis Episcopis ex vestræ majestatis auctoritate colloquium, sanctis eorum femoribus volui seras apponere. Tentavi genitalibus Sacerdotum (ut ita loquar) continentiæ fibulas adhibere.* Bernino inserts the epistle in his history (t. iii. p. 71.) as *testimonianza pur troppo autentica della malvaggità de que'*

wished to constringe all the clergy. St. Thomas had prayed that he might thus* be delivered

tempi. The letter indeed shows how strongly the secular clergy opposed the obligation of celibacy to which the Papal Court, instigated by the Monks, was determined upon subjecting them.

* He had run away from his family that he might become a Friar; and his brothers, having caught him, are said to have tried a most unworthy expedient for reconciling him to a secular life: "*Nam miserunt ad ipsum solum existentem in camerâ in quâ dormiebat, puellam pulcherrimam, cultu meritricio perornatam, quæ ipsum alliceret ad peccandum. Quam cum vidisset pugil invictus, qui sibi jam Dei sapientiam sponsam acceperat, cujus amore flagrabat; et sentiret in se carnis insurgere stimulum, quem semper tenuerat sub ratione subjectum, (hoc permittente Providentiæ Divinæ consilio, ut gloriosior de certamine sibi triumphus exurgeret,) accepto de camino in spiritu titione, juvenculam cum indignatione de camerâ expulit, et accedens in spiritus fervore ad angulum cameræ, signum crucis in pariete cum summitate titionis impressit, et prostratus ad terram, cum lacrymis a Deo petivit orando perpetuæ virginitatis cingulum, quod servare sibi in pugnâ concesserat incorruptum. Qui cum hæc orando cum lacrymis subito obdormisset, ecce ad eum duo Angeli cœlitus missi sunt; qui asserentes eum à Deo exauditum, et de pugnâ tam difficili obtinuisse triumphum, stringentes ipsum hinc inde in renibus, dixerunt: Ecce ex parte Dei te cingimus, quod petivisti, cingulo castitatis, quod nullâ poterit de cetero impugnatione dissolvi; et quod humanæ virtutis haberi non potest ex merito, tibi conceditur divinæ largitatis ex dono. Unde ex tunc mulierum aspectum semper abhorruit, et earum consessum, colloquium, et convictum toto posse vitavit. Consueverat autem ex hoc admirari quam plurimum, et homines divinis speculationibus deditos assuetus erat arguere, quod diutius possent con-*

from temptation. But holy Abbess Sara, one of the stars of the Egyptian galaxy, made it her prayer that she might perpetually be so tempted * and always resist the temptation. Accordingly she continued in it during thirteen years: at the end of that long trial she was only saved from succumbing by calling upon heaven for immediate aid. The Devil then, being aware that

sedendo mulieribus tempus longis locutionibus perdere, nisi aliquod negotium nimis utile causâ necessitatis occurreret, vel de Deo, aut de divinis locutio immineret. In quâ constrictione Angelici tactus cum dolorem sensibilem percepisset, excitatus est cum clamore; et quærentibus ad quid clamasset, revelare noluit donum divinitùs sibi datum; sed manifestandum usque ad suum obitum conservavit occultum. Quod tamen suo socio Raynaldo revelavit, qui ad laudem Dei et revelationem Sancti, pluribus revelavit ad exemplum. —Acta SS. Mart. t. i. p. 661.

* *Sara, in partibus Thebaidis Abbatissa, cum cogitationes ejus ad libidinem Diabolus incitare soleret, nunquam ut recederet tentatio, oravit; sed ut et ille assiduè oppugnaret, et ipsa semper vinceret. In hoc carnalis lasciviæ bello per annos tredecim fortiter contendit. Sed tandem, aliquantò ucrius impugnata quàm ut sustinere posset, clamavit ad Dominum Jesum Christum, et superavit inimicum, ita ut oranti apparens dæmon diceret, Vicisti me, Sara, vicisti! At illa nihil sibi ex hoc laudis vindicans, Non ego, inquit, vici te, sed Dominus meus Jesus.*—Marul. l. v. c. vii. & Sab. l. x. c. iii. Zuinger. Theatr. p. 2255.

Even if I had not been censured for withholding my authorities, I should set down the original in this and other such cases, that the reader may see how faithfully I have represented them.

all further efforts on his part would be ineffectual, made himself visible, and said, *Vicisti me, Sara, vicisti!* But holy Sara, as it became her, disclaimed the glory, and made answer, *Non ego vici te, sed Dominus meus.*

If the Egyptian Abbess had followed Chæremon's directions, she might have obtained a victory in far less time. That Abbot, being questioned concerning the time which was necessary for attaining this virtue in perfection, delivered it as his opinion, that if any person would abstain from all idle conversation, eschew anger, keep himself from worldly cares, allow himself no other food than two biscuits per day of six ounces each, and not more than three, or at the utmost four hours sleep, he might rely upon it, it would not require more than six months, with God's help, to make him sensible that it was not impossible for him to attain the virtue of perfect chastity.* This, however, has been censured as a temerarious opinion. Even had it been approved, it could not have been followed without a total retirement from the business of the world for the time required, which, for most persons, is impossible. Therefore, as there is nothing for which the Romish

* Cassian, Coll. xii. c. xv, p. 420.

Church cannot devise a substitute, the Dominicans (who have been the great manufacturers in this line) brought out an invention adapted to general use, whereby the virtue might be obtained at little cost, and "without inconvenience, interruption of business, or loss of time." The hint was taken from that memorable incident in the life of the Angelical Doctor which has been before related.

I hope, for the honour of a man whose extraordinary powers of mind few persons are competent to appreciate, (and certainly I am not of the number,) that Thomas Aquinas was not the inventor of this gross and palpable fable, but that it must be ascribed to that brother Raynaldus, who, after Thomas's death, related it on his alleged authority. His contemporary biographer, F. Gulielmus de Thoco, recorded it as an actual and undoubted vision, the reality whereof was proved by the pain which the Saint suffered, and the cries he uttered at the time, by its permanent effect during the remainder of his life, and by his dying attestation. The Dominicans, however, ventured in due time to produce a more substantial proof; they exhibited in their Convent at Vercelli* the

* It was said to have been presented to that convent by one

identical girdle* with which the Angelical Doctor had been cinctured by the Angels. Pope Pius V. was desirous of enriching Rome with so singular a relic, and proposed to purchase it from the Convent by giving them in exchange other relics of great reputation; but providentially,† before this could be effected, the Pope died, otherwise Vercelli and its Convent would have been deprived of this unique and inestimable curiosity. The Friars then became more sensible than ever of its value; and F. Cypriano Uberti (who was an Inquisitor in those parts) was moved by divine inspiration to have girdles of the same size and pattern manufactured by the Nuns of St. Margaret's Convent, to be worn as an approved preservative of chastity, and an immediate remedy for all thoughts and feelings inconsistent with purity of mind. The facsimiles were perfect in all respects except the material, for what it was of which the original was composed, no human investigation had been

of its members, Joannes Vercellensis, who took his name from the place, and was elected General of the Order in the year of the Saint's death.—Acta SS. Mart. t. i. 745.

* Alardus Gazæus. In Annot. ad Cassiani Coll. p. 310.

† *Sed providit Deus, Pontificis morte anno* 1572 *interveniente, ne tanto thesauro Vercellæ privarentur.*—Acta SS. Mart. t. i. 746.

able to ascertain. The imitation, however, was as exact as possible in all other points, and the virtue was the same, being communicated to the new girdles by contact with the celestial pattern. With what joy would St. Peter Damian have sung his *Nunc dimittis,* if he had lived to see this invention! A canon requiring the clergy to make St. Thomas's girdle a part of their dress at all times, would have made celibacy easy, and removed all those scandals which he so vehemently deplored.

The Angelical Thomas himself had given a hint for this invention, reminding his Order twice by miracle of the miraculous exemplar in their possession, as if he were impatient that they were so slow in imparting its benefits to the world at large. One of these hints was in the case of the blessed Estefania de Soncino. It was not till she had stript and rolled herself among thorns, to subdue temptation, after the example of the Benedictine and Seraphic Patriarchs, that calling to mind it was the eve of St. Thomas Aquinas's day, she bethought herself of an easier remedy, and prayed to him that he would deign to gird her as he himself had been girt with what we may venture to call the Cestus of Diana. The prayer was granted, and immediately she was constringed so tightly

by the unseen and spiritual cincture that, as St. Thomas had done, she cried aloud for pain. Here the interference and the miracle were known only by their effects. They were visible in the other instance. The blessed Columba of Milan, under a like paroxysm preferred a like prayer, and behold St. Thomas Aquinas appeared, with two Angels in his company, and a girdle whiter than snow in his hand. The Angels came as his assistants, because it would not have been decorous for the Angelical Doctor himself to have fastened it on. He sanctified it with the sign of the Cross and delivered it to them; they put it round the Beata,* and from that moment she became as unsullied in mind as the mystic cestus in hue with which she had thus been favoured.

After these examples it is not surprizing that the manufactory for girdles should have been set up in St. Margaret's Nunnery. It was so successful that F. Camillo Quadrio declares it would require whole volumes to contain the cases in which these girdles had† performed

* Acta SS. ut supra.

† *Paria asseruit P. Aurelius Corbellinus ex Ordine Eremitarum D. Augustini, et sacræ Inquisitionis Vercellis Consultor, atque mulieris unius sigillatim meminit luxui per multos annos deditæ, et P. Cypriani prænominati monitis nullis ab impudicitiâ revocabilis,*

a cure. No truss was ever so efficacious. For the purpose of extending the benefit of this most useful prophylactic, F. Frans Deurwerders, in the middle of the 17th century, with the approbation of Vicencio Candido, the then General of the Order, instituted an association called, in honour of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Militia. All who enrolled themselves in this confraternity were to wear the girdle either openly or secretly, as it pleased them. A form of prayer* for consecrating the girdles

usque dum ei persuasit Pater, ut impuros lumbos Thomisticæ Zonæ cingulo adstringeret; quod ubi fecit, paucos intra dies versa est in continentiæ speculum, quæ publicum fuerat libidinis incentivum: et hoc, inquit Corbellinus, propriis oculis vidimus, auribus audivimus, manus nostræ contrectaverunt, et particulari sigillo munivimus in nomine Domini.—Acta SS. ut supra.

The Bollandists had two of these girdles, one of which they gave to the Reverend Fathers of the Jesuit Convent at Antwerp, the other they kept for themselves. Henschenius and Papebroche were at that time the Editors of the Acta. They might do very well with one between them, upon the principle of *riding and tying*. But what would the other be among so many?

Madame de Sévigné alludes in one of her letters to the Mantle of St. Ursula as possessing a like virtue.

* F. Hyacinthus Choquet drew up the form, which is as follows: *Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, puritatis amator et custos, obsecramus immensam clementiam tuam, ut sicut ministerio Angelorum S. Thomam Aquinatem cingulo castitatis cingere, atque*

was drawn up; and the Dean of St. Peter's at Louvain, with all the Professors of that University, a great number of other clergy, and very many lay persons of both sexes, on the day when the Institution was solemnly announced, received the insignia in public* from his hands, as members of the new company, and girt their loins... not with truth, but with St. Thomas Aquinas's girdle! Pope Innocent X. approved the Institution, and granted indulgences to all who engaged in it: and if this new article from the Dominican manufactory did not become so fashionable as their former inventions of the Rosary and the Scapulary, it

a labe corporis et animæ præservari fecisti; ita ad honorem et gloriam ejus, benedicere et sanctificare digneris cingulâ istâ; ut quicumque ipsa circa renes reverenter portaverint ac tenuerint, ab omni immunditiâ mentis et corporis purificentur, atque in exitu suo per manus sanctorum Angelorum tibi præsentari mereantur.

F. Deurwerders also composed a prayer, which was frequently to be said by those who were in his militia, *pro obtinendâ in hoc bello victoriâ:... Omnipotens et misericors Deus, qui nos in durissimâ castitatis certamine constitutos, almo S. Thomæ Aquinatis cingulo munire dignatus es; largire supplicibus tuis, ut cœlesti ejus subsidio lascivum corporis et animæ hostem in hâc militiâ feliciter superare: et perpetuæ puritatis lilio coronati, inter castas Angelorum acies beatitudinis palmam a te accipere valeamus. Per Dominum*, &c.—Acta SS. ut supra.

* Echard. Script. Ord. Præd. t. ii. p. 618.

was not for want of exertion on the part of the vendors.*

According to the Bollandists,† this extraordinary militia was instituted with a particular view to the benefit of the female‡ sex. Men

* Even Echard says that experience had proved the utility of these girdles, and that this species of piety! was propagated not without effect in Louvain (where the Association began) and in other cities of the Low Countries, when he wrote. His work was published in 1721. t. ii. p. 618.

The Bollandists, notwithstanding the enmity between their order and the Dominicans, gave it a good puff in the true style of Romish quackery. It is not necessary to transcribe it after the samples which have been given of this... superstition shall I call it... or knavery? But the reader, who may at once be idle and industrious enough to trace me to my authorities, will find it in the first volume of the Acta for March, p. 747, at the end of the section *De Cingulo S. Thomæ Vercellis culto, et Militiâ Angelicâ sub hoc titulo apud Belgas institutâ.*

Had the Militia been instituted a little earlier, we should have had some glorious conceits upon it in the prize poems written for the *Certamen Angelico* at the dedication of the Angelical Doctor's Church at Madrid, 1656. As it is, the collection is truly characteristic.

† Acta SS. ut supra.

‡ Though the Girdle of St. Thomas was a Dominican and an Italian invention, it appears, from the Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci, that the cherubic sons of St. Dominic did not introduce it into the Italian Nunneries which were under their spiritual direction! The Friars of that worthy order have been detected in old times in such practices as have recently been brought to light in those memoirs. An attempt was made by some Nuns,

might visit the shrine of the Angelical Thomas, but as it was placed in one of those churches where no woman was allowed to enter, this means was devised whereby the weaker sex might obtain the same virtue which the real presence of his holy remains would have infused. It followed, as one of the demoralizing consequences, when holiness was imputed to celibacy, that women were disparaged as much as they were dreaded. The remark has been gravely made * that wicked Angels have frequently appeared in the form of women, but good ones never. F. Bernardus Baptizatus, in a sermon before the Council of

at the instigation of a Dominican, to murder Vitrarius, (of whom Erasmus has left so beautiful an account,) for interfering to reform a Nunnery at St. Omers. "*Erat illic monasterium sororcularum, in quo sic erat prolapsa omnis religiosæ vitæ disciplina, ut lupanar verius esset, quàm monasterium. Et tamen inter has erant quæ sanari possent et cuperent. Has dum crebris concionibus hortatibusque revocaret ad Christum, octo deploratæ ex eo numero conspirârant, et hominem observatum in locum semotum pertrahunt, atque ibi fasciis injectis præfocant. Nec finem faciunt donec casu nescio qui intervenientes, impium facinus dirimunt. Atque ille jam exanimatus erat, vixque revocatus est ut spiraret: nec tamen usquam hâc de re questus est, ne his quidem quos habebat intimos, nec ullum officium prætermisit, quo solet illarum saluti subvenire; imò ne vultus quidem unquam visus est in illas solito tristior. Noverat autorem hujus conspirationis, is erat Theologus Dominicanus, Episcopi Moriensis à suffragiis Episcopus, vir palam impiæ vitæ.*"—Epist. l. xv. Ep. 14. 699.

* P. Le Heurt. Philosophie des Espritz, p. 589.

Constance, exhorted the Council, in allusion to the then received story of Pope Joan, not to elect a woman for Pope; and he enforced the strange exhortation by saying, that woman was the head of sin, the weapon of the Devil, and the mother of guilt.* There was a Bishop who doubted, upon theological principles, whether the word *homo* could properly be applied to a woman,† as if she were rather an imperfection in nature than a perfect human being: not however being obstinate enough to found a heresy, he yielded to the arguments and opinions of his brethren in synod assembled. But proof, stronger than the decision of a synod, has been afforded that, whether woman be or be not an inferior animal, there is desecration in her touch for any thing that has been sanctified. One of the miracles which Pope St. Gregory the Great relates, as making no doubt of their truth, is of a horse which a Grecian nobleman lent to Pope St. John, when that Pontiff was on his way to confer with the Em-

* Lenfant, C. of Constance, vol. ii. 103.

† Greg. Tur. Hist. l. viii. § 20. p. 453. Gregory gives the scriptural arguments by which the Bishop was convinced; and, as if to show how entirely he was of the same opinion as the Council, when he speaks of Queen Ingoberga, he calls her *hominem timentem Deum*.—Ib. l. ix. § 26. p. 525. Ed. 1561.

peror Justinian. It was a gentle beast, and for that reason had always been ridden by the nobleman's wife! But after carrying the Pope, the horse could never again be brought to brook his mistress; showing by the most expressive snorting and neighing, and by his indignant motions,* that, consecrated as his back had been, no woman must ever again presume to take her seat there. And this choice story is inserted† in the prayer-book of the Romanists, to be read by all their clergy annually on Pope St. John's day!

Falsehoods like this, Sir, prove the prevalence of an opinion, as much as fables may enforce a moral truth. There are facts, however, to show the unnatural state of mind which the preposterous obligation to celibacy induces. A lady of the Portugueze court was desirous of receiving spiritual instruction from one of the primitive Friars Minorite, for whom her mistress, the Infanta St. Sancha, had founded

* Dialogues, b. iii. c. ii. p. 211.

† I learn this from the "Poor Man's Preservative against Popery," (p. 132), which happened to reach me this day (Oct. 12), while I was transcribing the story for the press. By this very useful little work, and by his "Practical and Internal Evidence," my excellent friend Mr. Blanco White has rendered great and well-timed service to the Protestant cause.

a monastery at Alenquer. The Friar, who was such a paragon of seraphical holiness, that he never allowed his eyes to look upon a woman, took as much pains to avoid her as she did to obtain an interview with him. One day they met in a place where he had no means of escaping, upon which he requested that she would send for some flax and a lighted taper, saying that when this was done he would talk with her. These things were brought accordingly, and he set fire to the flax. "See, Lady," he exclaimed in the fervour of his spirit, "how the flame spreads! Our human frailty is kindled in like manner by conversation with women, and therefore I fly from them." Upon this he turned his back and hastened away, leaving her,* says one of the seraphic historians, not more confused at his departure than edified by his caution and his virtue. When this Friar (whose name has not been preserved on earth) died at Alenquer, St. Antonio, who was then performing mass in the Convent of Santa Cruz, at Coimbra, saw his soul pass clean through Purgatory, like a bird upon the wing, unsinged, and ascend gloriously into Paradise.†

* Fr. Manoel da Esperança, Hist. Seraf. da Prov. de Portugal, t. i. l. i. c. xiv. § 3. p. 76.

† Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs: composées première-

A brother of the same order, and of the same age, was more valiant, confiding, like holy Sara of the Thebais, in his own virtue. "Father," said he to brother Giles of Assissi, "I have overcome a terrible temptation! There was a woman behind me in the street, and the Devil assaulted me fiercely. The nearer she came the stronger the temptation grew. At last I determined to brave the Old Enemy by standing still, and looking the woman full in the face. And so I conquered." "Was the woman handsome?" said Giles.* "No, Father,"

ment en Portugais par R. P. Marco de Lisbone, et en Espaignol par le R. P. Diego de Navarre, puis en Italien per Horace d'Iola, maintenant en François par D. S. Parisien. Part i. vol. ii. l. vi. c. xxix. ff. 241.

* This friar, who was one of the twelve Apostles of St. Francis, and whom Francis used to call one of his Knights of the Round Table, had a reputation for saying good things. A man, after hearing him preach upon chastity, which was a favourite topic, observed to him, that he was easy upon that score, being faithful in thought as well as deed to his wife. "Does that satisfy your conscience?" said Giles. "Many a man gets drunk with his own wine."—*Cornejo*, i. 591.

I shall have occasion to say more of Brother Giles hereafter, ...but I will notice one of his moral sayings here for its worth. "Whoever, for the love of God, bears all his afflictions with patience, will soon obtain such grace that he will be master of this world, and have one foot in the next."—*Chroniques des Frères Mineurs*, vol. ii. l. vii. c. xxvii.

he replied, "she was old, and excessively ugly."*

It is just possible, Sir, to be decorous while exhibiting some of the extravagances and follies which have arisen from the morality of the Cloister and of the Romish Church; but it is not possible to be grave. And yet it is a grave subject! Can there be a stronger proof of the diseased state of mind which such morality produces, than in the rule which Cassian† pre-

* Fr. Damian Cornejo, Chron. Serafica, t. i. p. 591.

† *Hæc erit igitur purgationis hujus prima custodia, ut cum menti nostræ memoria sexus fœminei per subtilem suggestionem diabolicæ calliditatis obrepserit, primum recordatione præmissâ matris, sororum, parentum, seu certè fœminarum sanctarum, quantocyus eam de nostris recessibus extrudere festinemus; ne si fuerimus in ea diutius immorati, occasione sexus semel indepti illex malorum ad eas personas exinde subtiliter devolvat, ac præcipitet mentem, per quas noxias cogitationes possit inserere.*—De Inst. Cœnobiorum, l. vi. c. xiii. p. 113.

Let it not be said that this is the morality of a Scythian, who lived 1400 years ago, and was educated among the Egyptian monks. What follows is the comment of his editor, a Benedictine of the 17th century. *Solet enim diabolus, ut mentem nostram noxiis imaginibus et phantasiis sexus fœminei occupet et detineat, subinde immittere ac ingerere cogitationem, seu recordationem matris, aut sororum, aut sanctarum fœminarum; quibus in animum admissis, cum ab illis minus caveamus, sensim ad aliarum mulierum, aut rerum turpium cogitationes perniciosas devolvamur; nisi quantocyus primam illam suggestionem diabolicæ calliditatis repellamus.*

scribes for the Cœnobite, that if at any time the remembrance of his mother or sister comes across him, he must instantly repel it as a suggestion of the Devil, who, by thus introducing a thought of the female sex, would lead him on to think of other women, and so induce evil imaginations and desires?... Of the persons who give such instructions, Sir, and of those who endeavour to follow them, may we not say with the Prophet,* "How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?"†

But worse proofs, if any thing can be worse, are to be found in those turpitudes of the confessional, which are as unutterable as I trust in

* Hosea, viii. 5.

† What shall we think of the state of morals indicated by this anecdote in the life of Gregory of Tours:.. "*ut ætatulæ robur habuit, literarum studiis mancipatur sub patruo Gallo episcopo; quo tempore Nicetius Lugdunensis cum vicinus esset civitatis ubi parentes Gregorii habitarent, nescio quid excelsum in puero conspicatus, jussit puerum ad se acciri, et collobio se totum in exemplum pudicitiæ contegens ut ne summis quidem digitis juvenculum contingeret, puero benedixit, atque prospera precatus est.*

If the *Excerptum de Canonibus Catholicorum Patrum*, which is printed as Bede's, (t. viii. p. 961,) under the title of *De Remediis Peccatorum*, be not of Bede's compiling, it was certainly drawn up in those times,.. and what a disclosure is there made of clerical morals in what the Romanists represent as the heroic if not the golden age of their Church!

God they are unimaginable for all into whose hands these volumes will pass, the few alone excepted who have seen the books wherein, by authority of the Romish Church, they are exposed. Do not call upon me here for vouchers, Sir, you know to what I am alluding! But, setting aside these abominations, I affirm that the Confessional, in its ordinary effects, has done more toward producing a general corruption of manners than the Press itself, even where the Press is altogether free, and its freedom most abused. It is in the most Catholic countries of Europe that the *Cicisbeo* and the *Cortejo* are recognized persons in the drama of domestic life. A Frenchman* who lived in England when English morals were at the worst, observed, nevertheless, that the Protestant religion was as advantageous for husbands, as the Romish for those persons whom he was pleased to call lovers. The reason has been well expressed by the Piemontese writer Maranda. "Nature," says that author, "has placed two barriers for the preservation of female virtue . . . modesty and remorse. By confession and absolution the priest removes them both."† Injurious in every

* Saint Evremont. Eng. trans. vol. i. 41.

† *La nature avoit posé deux barrières pour maintenir la chas-*

way as the practice of confession is, it is the celibacy of the clergy which has rendered it especially intolerable; and without that celibacy, we are told* that the Roman Catholic Church could not exist.

teté chez les femmes, la pudeur et les remords. Le prêtre les anéantit toutes les deux, par la confession et l'absolution.—Tableau du Piémont sous le régime des Rois, p. 106.

This book was written by a Revolutionist about the year 1800, but the chapter which it contains on the clergy is not the less worthy of attention. *Observe l'Italie toute entière,* he says, *à quelques nuances près, la confession y est générale et fréquente, et les femmes d'un débordement effroyable.* And that these things are cause and effect he gives abundant proof!

* "*La religion Catholique ne sauroit exister, et n'a jamais existé, sans avoir dans son sein des hommes détachés d'eux-mêmes, de leurs biens, de leur volonté même; c'est-à-dire des hommes engagés dans le célibat par un lien religieux, dépouillés de leurs biens par un vœu religieux, renonçant à leur volonté même par le vœu d'obéissance.*"—*Le Génie de la Révolution considéré dans l'Education,* t. iii. p. 438.

Of Catholic religion this is not true, of the Roman Catholic it is.

LETTER VIII.

THOMAS A BECKET.

I HAVE now, Sir, to consider your observations upon the view which is taken in the Book of the Church of Becket's character and conduct. When Dr. Milner says* that "the Poet copiously discharges his bile upon this celebrated champion of the Church," I am not surprized at the remark;..." *his similia multa evomuit verius quàm*† *dixit;*"...and it is quite natural that I should appear bilious in the eyes of one who has the black jaundice. But I did not expect that you would have charged me with trying St. Thomas of Canterbury "by the present constitution, the present laws and the present manners of Christian states, and by the present notions of what is fit and proper."‡ With better cause may I complain that, in your statement of the case, you have passed over the main point upon which it

* Page 17. † Erasmus. ‡ Page 80.

turns, and then from loose general assertions deduced inferences which cannot be supported.

The clerical immunities, you say, "founded a part of the constitution of every Christian state,..they had been granted and confirmed by wise and great Princes, and from the time in which they were granted, had been observed and respected by the good."* But the facts are as I have stated them...Before the Conquest the Bishop and the Sheriff sate together in the County Court, and clerical causes as well as other were heard before their joint tribunal. William the Conqueror was induced to grant a charter† empowering the clergy to be tried in a court of their own; after which, not so much by grants from wise Princes or weak ones as by aid of the forgeries which they foisted into the Decretals, they claimed an exemption from all secular jurisdiction.

It has been argued that the extension of this privilege to criminal cases was a refuge provided by common law‡ to save the lives of literate offenders. This, if it were so, would be analogous to the custom which prevailed (if I remember rightly) in some of the Italian

* Page 80. † Turner, i. 208.

‡ Coleridge's Ed. of Blackstone, vol. iv. p. 369. N. 3.

States, whereby a criminal obtained his pardon if he could show that he was the best workman in his craft. But it appears to have grown immediately out of that exemption which the clergy claimed when none but their own body could read, and which they grounded not upon the utility of sparing a learned man, but upon the sanctity of their order, perverting to their purpose the text of Scripture, which says, "touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." * Mr. Barrington has observed that we are not to judge the propriety of this privilege by the present state of things, for, while it was confined to actual priests,† the inconvenience was far less than is commonly supposed: because such crimes only were within the benefit as a munificently provided priesthood had little temptation to commit. This observation is confuted by history. It is true that the poorest of the clergy could in those days be under no temptation to steal for want; but the complaints which were made against their immunity, prove that they were not less liable than other men to other temptations; and from the unnatural state wherein they were placed

* Blackstone, b. iv. c. 28. N. a.

† Ibid. N. 3. p. 369.

by the law of celibacy, more liable to fall into those crimes which arise from illicit connection with the other sex. A case of this peculiar nature* brought on the contest between Henry and Becket. I must remind you, Sir, that the Judges complained† to the King of the frequent thefts, rapines, and homicides, which went unpunished because they were committed by the clergy. William of Newbury‡ (a churchman himself, but one who, standing in no need of such immunities, perceived the evil which arose from them) affirms that more than an hundred homicides had been perpetrated by the clergy in England in that reign; and his honest avowal is, that having a license to do what they would with impunity,§ they were in no fear either of God or man. The Popes themselves, when they were personally concerned, paid no regard to the immunities for which they contended so haughtily. Before the Italian mode of putting an enemy out of the way quietly was brought to that perfection which it had attained in the days of the Borgias, we read of their mutilat-

* Lyttelton, iv. 14. third ed.

† Turner, i. 209.

‡ Quoted in Turner...ut supra.

§ Lyttelton, iv. 3.

ing* the Cardinals who opposed them, torturing them,† and putting them to death, without observing any formalities of deprivation, or even of trial. ..The secular powers seldom ventured to violate this injurious immunity, but sometimes they had recourse to singular means for checking or punishing the audacity with which the clergy presumed upon it. A woman of Santarem went to King Pedro *O Justiceiro* at Evora, and complained that a dignified and wealthy Priest had murdered her husband, and that no redress was given her. Pedro was a man whose character was worthy of being dramatized by Shakspeare, so strongly had the circumstances of his life and station acted upon his strong feelings and ungoverned mind. When next he came to Santarem, he fixed his eyes upon a young mason whose appearance he liked, sent for him, and ordered him to

* Modern Universal Hist. vol. ix. 544. Luitprand, l. vi. c. vi. referred to.

† Lenfant, C. de Pise, t. i. 43-46. The Bishop of London was one of the cardinals whom Urban VI. tortured, and would have put to death, as he did the other cardinals, if the King had not interfered. Urban's pretext was, that these cardinals intended to poison him. One of them confessed he had deserved all his sufferings for the cruelties which he had practised when acting as legate for this very Urban.

seek for the priest, kill him wherever he might find him, and escape if he could; but if he failed in escaping, he was to allow himself to be taken, and leave the rest to him. The man found the murderer engaged in a religious procession, killed him on the spot, and was immediately apprehended. Pedro sent orders that the case must not be tried till he was present; meantime he directed the widow to supply the prisoner with food, and his own almoner to give her money for that purpose. The clergy prest for justice, as the King intended they should do: the matter accordingly was brought into court in his presence, and after the whole evidence had been heard, and the fact proved upon the mason, Pedro asked whether the priest who had been murdered had been an inoffensive peaceable man, or if he had done any thing which might probably have provoked the fate he had met with; for it was hardly to be supposed that he should have been killed in this public manner without some cause. It was replied that some time ago he had killed a man, but that that affair had been regularly settled. And how settled? the King inquired. He had been suspended, they said, from saying mass, or officiating as a priest. The King then pronounced that the mason should be punished

in the same manner, and passed sentence upon him that he should never again work at his trade. And then he married him to the widow, and settled a pension upon them sufficient for their support.* The magistrates of Padua carried this sort of wild justice farther. Finding that the ecclesiastical authorities never inflicted any adequate punishment upon offenders of their own body, they made a decree that whoever killed a priest should be fined one penny, and it is said that many persons availed themselves of this invitation to execute justice for themselves.† You have yourself stated that the contest in its first stage turned wholly upon these immunities:‡ but you affirm that they were an acknowledged bulwark§ of the English constitution. A bulwark of the constitution, Sir! Say rather a strong hold for criminals, erected in defiance of it. ..You call them also *rights*, Sir, which seems rather an unfortunate denomination for the privilege of doing wrong.

* Fernam Lopes, Chronica del Rey D. Pedro, c. x.

† Modern Universal History, vol. ix. p. 648. The authorities referred to are Spond. Annal. 1282. Jacob. Cavac. l. iii. Hist. Cœnob. S. Justin. Patav.

‡ Page 80. § Page 81.

These rights, however, as you say, "most certainly at that time made a part of the law of England." I have just shown when and in what manner they became so; and that because they were inconsistent with the spirit of that law, and had been found injurious in practice, by impeding the course of justice and lessening the security of the subject, the Judges, in the exercise of their duty, represented them as a grievance to the King, in order that the privilege might be withdrawn by the same authority which had conferred it.

But "let us listen to Montesquieu," you say.* "I am not," says that great man, "violently in love with the privileges of the clergy; but I wish that their jurisdiction should once be well established. After that the question is not, whether it was right to establish it, but whether it is established; whether it makes part of the laws of the land, and whether it is connected with them throughout." So far, Sir, I accord with him and with you. When he says, "as much as the power of the Church is dangerous in a republic, so much is it useful in a monarchy, particularly in those which tend to despotism,".. I hesitate; for it appears to

* Page 81.

me that under any form of government it is expedient, both for the state and the people, that the Church should possess due power; but that any degree of power or influence which would be injurious under the one form, must be equally so under the other. And when he proceeds to say, "where would Spain and Portugal be since the loss of their laws, without this power,.. which is the only check on arbitrary sway?"*... I perceive that Montesquieu would never have written thus if he had been well acquainted with the state of those countries, and had made their history his study. For to that power it is that the loss of their laws and liberties was owing: through the assistance of that power it was that the despotism was established; and then the degradation was induced, which, in spite of all the virtues of the

* *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. ii. c. iv. I have used Mr. Butler's translation of the passage;..but I must carry on the quotation here to the end of the paragraph, and show that Montesquieu speaks of this power as an evil becoming only incidentally good when it acts as a check upon something worse:... *Où en seroient l'Espagne et le Portugal depuis la perte de leurs loix sans ce pouvoir qui arrête seul la puissance arbitraire? Barrière toujours bonne, lorsqu'il n'y en a point d'autre: car comme le despotisme cause à la nature humaine des maux effroyables, le mal même qui le limite est un bien.*"

national character, have made those countries what we see them!

"Now all history informs us," you say,* "that long before the commencement of this celebrated contest, the immunities of the clergy had been established and become part of the law of England. Does not this decide the question? Must we not conclude, on the principles of Montesquieu, that the monarch's attack upon them was altogether wrong? that Becket, in defending them, was altogether right?". What history informs us is, that these immunities began in William the Conqueror's time, about fourscore years before. And I am inclined to think, Sir, neither you nor Montesquieu would dissent from the principle, that when any thing becomes manifestly and notoriously an evil and a nuisance, it ought to be abated, whatever prescription may be pleaded for it.

It is even questionable whether any further prescription could be pleaded for this than a custom which had grown up among other abuses during the troubled reign of Stephen. For in the dispute which ensued, it was not Becket, but the King, who appealed to the law of the land.

* Page 82.

The Constitutions of Clarendon were declared in the preamble to be "a declaration* and *recognition* of certain customs, liberties, and dignities of the Kings his ancestors, to wit, Henry his grandfather, and others, which ought to be observed in the realm." It does not appear that Becket at any time rested his case upon that charter, by virtue of which alone it could be pretended that the immunities in question were part of the law of the land. They were defended, not as a grant from the Sovereign, but as a privilege belonging to the order; the real object being to render that order independent of the state, to exalt the mitre above the crown, and form the clergy throughout all Christendom into a compact body, acting upon one system, animated by one spirit, and directed by one head, and every where inde-

* "*Anno ab Incarnatione Domini millesimo centesimo sexagesimo quarto, papatus Alexandri anno quarto, illustrissimi regis Anglorum Henrici II. anno decimo, in presentiâ ejusdem regis facta est ista recordatio* vel recognitio cujusdam partis consuetudinum et libertatum et dignitatum antecessorum suorum, videlicet regis Henrici avi sui, et aliorum, quæ observari et teneri debent in regno. *Et propter dissensiones et discordias, quæ emerserant inter clerum et justicios domini regis, et baronum regni, de consuetudinibus et dignitatibus regni,* facta est ista RECOGNITIO *coram Archiepiscopis et Episcopis et Clero, et Comitibus et Baronibus et Proceribus regni.*"—Lyttelton, iv. App. ii. p. 414.

pendent of the civil power. To have appealed to the charter, would have been taking lower ground than suited the pretensions of the Romish hierarchy; and the charter would hardly have borne them out. For the object which the Conqueror appears to have had in view, was to bring persons before an ecclesiastical court who thought it a degradation * to acknowledge any such authority. It was to protect the clergy from secular invasions, by enabling them to try causes, in which ecclesiastical affairs were concerned, before a tribunal of their own. This was consistent with the character and policy of William: it is not so to suppose that he would have granted the clergy an exemption from condign punishment for all offences whatsoever. The tenour of the charter is to arm them with useful power for their own protection,..to take from secular courts the cognizance of ecclesiastical matters,..not to transfer to the spiritual courts cases of common law, wherein an ecclesiastic should be concerned. If such a consequence may be inferred from

* *Si vero aliquis per superbiam elatus ad justitiam Episcopalem venire noluerit, vocetur semel, secundo et tertio; quod si nec sic ad emendationem venerit, excommunicetur: et si opus fuerit ad hoc vindicandum fortitudo et justitia Regis sive Vicecomitis adhibeatur.*—Canciani, iv. 361.

the charter,* it is not expressed there; though very possibly the deed may have been so drawn up by those who advised it as to bear an interpretation beyond the King's meaning. Be that as it may, it is certain that Henry, in the proceedings at Clarendon, professed only to restore the ancient custom, ..to correct an abuse which had grown up since his grandfather's days,... not to abrogate an existing law; nor to infringe upon the charter of the clergy.

Supposing, however, that what he intended had actually been an infringement upon the ecclesiastical privileges, let us see to what it amounts. He would have made the clergy amenable to the law of the land for secular offences. He required (and this too with the consent of the Bishops) that ecclesiastics who were found guilty of any heinous crime, should be first degraded, and then delivered over to

* ...*mando et regiâ auctoritate præcipio, ut nullus Episcopus, vel Archidiaconus de Legibus Episcopalibus amplius in Hundret placita teneant, nec causam quæ ad regimen animarum pertinet, ad judicium secularium hominum adducant. Sed quicunque secundum Episcopales Leges de quâcumque causâ vel culpâ interpellatus fuerit, ad locum quem ad hoc Episcopus elegerit vel nominaverit, veniat, ibique de causâ suâ respondeat, et non secundum Hundret, sed secundum Canones et Episcopales Leges, rectum Deo et Episcopo suo faciat.*—Canciani. iv. 361.

the secular courts for punishment.* He required that the Church would do with such of its own members as had committed murder or any other atrocious breach of the laws, what it was ready and eager to do with them in cases of heresy. And in this quarrel† it was that Becket first bearded his Sovereign! You have candidly admitted that what Henry required on this head was "perhaps very proper;"‡ but you contend that it was contrary to the existing law. And concerning the Constitutions of Clarendon, you adduce Turner as an authority in your favour. "In justice to Becket," says that learned and discriminating writer, "it must be admitted that these famous articles completely changed the legal and civil state of the clergy, and were an actual subversion, as far as they went, of the papal policy so boldly introduced by Gregory VII." I am obliged to Mr.

* Lyttelton, iv. 16.

† Fuller has a characteristic remark upon the assertion that Becket died *pro grege*. "He did not," says he, "die for feeding his flock, for any fundamental point of religion, or for defending his flock against the wolf of any dangerous doctrine; but merely he died for his flock: namely, that the sheep thereof (though ever so scabbed) might not be dressed with tar, and other proper, but sharp and smarting medicines."—Church History, b. iii. p. 35.

‡ Page 86.

Townsend* for remarking that you have quoted one half only of this passage to prove a point which is confuted by the remainder. For the upright historian whom you have alleged, proceeds to say, "these new constitutions abolished that independence on the legal tribunals of the country, which William had unwarily permitted,† and they again subjected the clergy, as in the Anglo-Saxon times, to the common law of the land." And I have shown that these constitutions were drawn up as a recognition of the laws in use under Henry I., the object being by that recognition to put an end to immunities which had been usurped.

I pass over for the present your curious remarks upon the "penitential austerities" which Becket practised immediately after his consecration. A more fitting opportunity for commenting upon that subject will occur hereafter. Some questions‡ which you have put, Sir, it is not necessary to answer, because they can only have arisen from a misapprehension of the passage in the Book of the Church to which they allude. But when you§ demand with a tone of triumph, "whose memory should the present

* Accusations of History against the Church of Rome, p. 75. Note.

† Hist. of England, i. 213.

‡ Page 83. § Ibid.

prelacy of the Established Church of England most respect, .. the memory of Becket, who preserved the possessions of his see; or the memory of those prelates so eloquently praised by you in a further part of your work, who in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth so liberally complimented away large portions of them to their Sovereign?" .. I can only wonder at the question, and suppose that he who accuses those prelates of complimenting away the possessions of their sees to the crown, must be very little acquainted with the records of those times. Their vindication is to be found in their history, as it appears in the faithful compilations of good old John Strype, one of those humble and happy-minded men who, by diligently labouring in the fields of literature, find while they live an enjoyment from which time takes away nothing of its relish, and secure for themselves an honourable and lasting remembrance in the gratitude of posterity.

"Some candid Protestants," you say, "have done justice to Becket's memory." Some candid Romanists will include me, Sir, in such an acknowledgement. Having always endeavoured in my historical writings to render honour where honour is due, and always allowed full weight to those motives by which men are deceived, or seek to deceive themselves, when they are

acting ill, I had in this place almost expected from Mr. Butler, an admission that no Protestant could represent Becket, on the whole, more favourably. Could the most zealous advocate for the papal power have spoken in higher terms of his magnanimity, or expressed a stronger condemnation of the King's conduct on those occasions in which Henry acted with injustice and cruelty? When I compare my statement with yours,..when I look at the way in which you have summed up the second part of the contest, keeping out of sight whatever was violent, whatever was offensive on Becket's part,..in fact all the circumstances which led to his fate, and may truly be said to have provoked it,..I do not wonder you should have abstained from all detail as foreign* to your subject; and can only regret that with so much courtesy there should be so little candour,..that with so much ingenuity there should be so little ingenuousness!

One remark more will suffice for winding up this division of our argument. In no part of his conduct is Becket less excusable than for accepting the Primacy under the circumstances in which it was offered to him. The manner of his promotion was irregular; the motive for

* Page 87.

it is known to have been a persuasion on the King's part that he would co-operate with him in those plans of necessary reform which had been concerted certainly with his knowledge, and in all likelihood with his counsel. For proof of this I refer you to Turner; by whom also you will find it stated, that when he told the King the effect of this promotion must be to make him lose his favour, or sacrifice his own duty as a servant of God, he spake with a smile; so that, whether intentionally or not, the manner conveyed a meaning which invalidated the words. I need not say to you, Sir, that our friend is an historian who may be trusted in his references. The indefatigable diligence which has enabled him to throw so much light on Anglo-Saxon and English history is accompanied in him with perfect candour, with unimpeachable fidelity, and with a true spirit of Christian charity, as enlightened as it is enlarged. It cannot, I think, be pretended that Becket was urged by a sense of duty to this dissimulation: if it be, Heaven save us from a religion which teaches such morality! But if it became his duty afterwards, as a Prelate of the Romish Church, to oppose the King in those very measures for the promotion of which he had with his own full knowledge been pre-

ferred; if it became his duty to excommunicate the King's ministers and servants for obeying him in the discharge of their offices; to defy and insult the King himself; to strengthen, if not actually to raise up foreign enemies against him, and to threaten him with excommunication; after which, the next measure would have been a sentence of deposition, unless the King yielded the points in dispute,...if this, I say, was the duty of Becket, as a Romish Prelate,..which the Romanists at this day,..the English Romanists, the liberal English Romanists,..affirm it to have been,..then is the religion, which renders such conduct a duty, incompatible with the honour and safety of Sovereigns, with the peace and security of States. Even you, Sir, who for your apparent liberality have obtained the applause of unwary Protestants, and drawn on yourself the reprehension of the more consistent members of your own Church, even you, Sir, assert that Becket's conduct "was admired and applauded by the whole world," and that he "perished for a faithful adherence to ecclesiastical duty."* If such be the duty of a Romish Prelate, then is the system which makes it so as irrecon-

* Page 89.

cileable with national policy as it is with Christian principles,..as incompatible with loyalty as it is with religion,..as inconsistent with the constitution of these kingdoms as it is with the gospel,..as intolerable as it has every where shown itself to be intolerant.

One of your own* writers, not long since, has told us that the professors of that religion are unchanged. These are his words: "If any one says, or pretends to insinuate, that modern Roman Catholics, who have been the late objects of the bounty of Parliament, differ in one *iota* from their ancestors, he either deceives himself, or wishes to deceive others."..I believe him.

* Mr. Francis Plowden, in his Case Stated. I take the quotation from a letter of Sir Harcourt Lees in the newspapers.

LETTER IX.

PROCEEDINGS UPON BECKET'S DEATH.—KING JOHN.—TRIUMPH OF THE PAPAL POWER.

"My task will be easy in this letter, Sir, inasmuch as you have not attempted to impugn any one statement in the chapter to which it relates.

You have past over in silence the recital of those artifices and falsehoods, by which Becket's reputation for sanctity was established, and his shrine brought into vogue as the most fashionable mart for miracles. But I must observe that Dr. Milner has touched upon one part of this subject, and represented me as having asserted that the Roman "Catholics transferred their worship of Christ to the martyr Becket."* He has fabricated this statement, with his wonted regard to truth, from the well-known circumstance which I had repeated, that in one year, when more than 600*l.* was offered at the shrine of St. Thomas, nothing was presented at that of our Saviour in

* Strictures, page 21, note.

the same Church. Gross and malicious as the misrepresentation is, I should have let it pass, as unworthy of notice, had it not been for the sentence which follows it. I think, Sir, your cheeks will tingle when I remind you of that sentence, as they must have done when you perused it!..If I have felt indignant for the sake of our common religion, of our common nature, what must you have done! What painful emotions of sorrow and shame and mortification must it have caused in you that such a sentence should have proceeded from an advocate in your cause...from a fellow labourer...from one whom you wished to respect, and professed to admire...from one whose name has been associated with your own in a vote of thanks, and for the very publication in which this offence has been committed! What indignation, that a man and a scholar of your communion should have been found who would allude to such a subject...that a member, a priest, a prelate of your Church should introduce the name of Christ in such combination!! I will not trust myself to express what I think of the state of temper and feeling in which that detestable sentence must have been written: nor will I be provoked to use the tremendous recrimination for which he knows the records of the Papacy would supply such damnable materials. "*Seriò tibi confirmo,*

nunquam fore ut obliviscar hominem me esse,— neque in certamen adeo turpe sum descensurus." I have even dropt, Sir, the most emphatic words of this quotation, appropriate as they might be. But I will say of him, that he is one of those persons "*quos, quum literæ quas profitentur, ex feris humaniores efficere debuerint, nihil tamen illorum moribus agrestius, nihil ingeniis inamœnius, nihil scriptis virulentius, nihil verbis atrocius.*"* "A reproof† cannot be better bestowed than upon an unjust reprover, nor charity more shown than in a just reprehension of those who have none."

But I dismiss this person, and return to an opponent in whom urbanity is always found, even when ingenuousness is wanting. Your observations concerning the theoretical utility of such an empire‡ as the Popes endeavoured to

* Scaliger, Epist. 272. p. 520.

† South.

‡ "We have provided us of a very trim shift," says Lucifer, the Prince of Darkness, in a letter to the persecuting prelates of the popish clergy, (one of the Lollard papers which Fox has preserved,) "for instead of the Apostles, and other their adherents, which draw by the same line of theirs as well in manners as doctrines; and are odious enemies unto us, we have caused you to be their successors and put you in their place which be prelates of the Church in these later times, by our great might and subtlety, as Christ hath said of you, 'they have reigned,

erect, are in conformity with what I have said,* not in opposition to it. Only this condition is required for making absolute despotism the best of all possible governments, that the Prince should be all-good, omniscient, and infallible; who is there, then, that would not wish him to be omnipotent? That great good, arose at one time from the papal system, surely, Sir, I have shown as fully and fairly as the most devoted adherent of that system can desire. Are you able either to deny or to extenuate the evils which afterwards arose from it? When you say, that the Popes who claimed the supreme authority in temporal affairs were "less† blameable than the sovereigns who conceded it, for that the latter were silly, but the former not to be condemned by worldly wisdom," what is this but advancing that the knave is not so censurable as the dupe?..what is it but preferring wickedness to weakness?

but not by me.' Once we promised unto him all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship us; but he would not, saying, *my kingdom is not of this world;* and went his way, when the multitude would have made him a temporal king. But to you truly, that serve us on the earth, is that my promise fulfilled."—Fox, i. 572.

* Book of the Church, i. 283—288. Life of Wesley, i. 308, 9.

† Page 96.

Will history bear you out in your assertion, Sir, when you say, that "in the action and reaction of the Pope's aggression and the Monarch's resistance, it must be admitted* that the clergy generally supported the monarch?" Far from making any such admission, I affirm that the secular clergy generally supported the papal usurpations, and the regulars uniformly and always. When you tell me afterwards that we are indebted to the Roman Catholic religion† for Magna Charta, had you forgotten, Sir, that the Pope, as he whom God had appointed over nations and kingdoms, reprobated and condemned that charter; pronounced it, in all its clauses, null and void; forbade the King to observe it; inhibited the Barons (who, being instigated by the Devil, he said, had extorted these concessions in degradation of the crown) from requiring its execution, .. and suspended the Primate Langton for refusing to excommunicate them on this account? To Langton indeed we are deeply indebted for the noble part which he took in obtaining the charter from the King, and for his yet nobler conduct in maintaining it against the Pope. But to the Roman Catholic religion, as acting under its acknow-

* Page 96. † Page 168.

ledged head; these are our obligations on the score of Magna Charta!

Where, Sir, was your memory when you claimed our gratitude to the papal church for this great charter of our liberties; .. or where did you suppose was mine? Had you forgotten that another Pope, in the plenitude of his power, absolved another King of England from his solemn engagement to observe that charter, pronouncing that, if the King should have sworn to observe it, he had sworn, previously, to maintain the rights of the crown; to those rights the charter was derogatory, and to that prior oath regard must first be paid; and, therefore, Pope Clement V. released Edward I. from all promises prejudicial to his ancient* prerogative. I have usually to thank you, Sir, when you send me to my books. These, I repeat it, are our obligations to the Romish religion on the score of Magna Charta! And, it is worth noting by the way, you have here the opinion of the Pope *ex cathedrâ* that the King's Coronation oath is paramount to all other engagements and considerations.

Voltaire, you say, has observed that during

* Collier, i. 499. The authority referred to is *Conventiones Literæ, &c.* t. ii. p. 379.

the dark ages, there was less of barbarism and ignorance in the papal dominions than in any other European state. Less ignorance I should think, and less rudeness, but certainly not less ferocity. The papal states must have been much in the same condition as the other parts of Italy. Amid all the spoliations and sackages which Rome had endured, it still remained a great and splendid city; and as the whole population had never been transplanted or destroyed by one of those dreadful acts of remorseless hostility, which were frequent in the ancient world, much of the manners and something of the knowledge also of better times was preserved there through ages of continuous degradation. ..I do not seek to detract from the utility of the papacy in those ages: far from it. The more beneficial the papal power can be shown to have been, the better would its history accord with my persuasion that all things, upon the great scale, have tended to the general good, and the developement of the great scheme of Providence: enough may be perceived to indicate this, dimly as we see, and limited as is our sight. But surely, Sir, the Popes were at one time as much the enemies of learning, as they were the patrons at another; and when we call to mind, what works of the ancients

have been obliterated by the monkish train scribers, and what the writings are which were transferred to the vellum in their stead, something must be set off against the debt which literature owes to the monastic institutions.

You speak of what the Popes did to preserve peace among princes, and to alleviate the general calamity of the times.* Was this the disposition, Sir, which Hildebrand and his successors manifested? Were their efforts directed to save men's lives, or to destroy? Did they bring peace into the world, or a sword? I think, Sir, if you call to mind the age of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and the wars of persecution from the confederation against the Albigenses to the last convulsions of their desperate and maddened descendants in the Cevennes, you will find that the Romish Church has instigated more wars than it ever succeeded in terminating, or even attempted to terminate. Those wars must be added to the account, which the Popes promoted merely from political views, to enlarge their territory, to aggrandize their nephews, or to form an establishment for their bastards, or to maintain their own disputed election to the chair of St. Peter. During the

* Page 97.

long schism the rival pontiffs used all their endeavours to keep their respective adherents at war, lest their own well-deserved deposition should be agreed on as one of the conditions of peace.*

It is of the dark ages that you speak, and therefore, I do not pursue the argument into later times. But how is it, Sir, that you have ventured even to hint at the personal characters of the Popes in those ages? "That a few in the long list," you say, "were stained by vice, is not denied; or that others exhibited the workings of those passions which too often accompany the possession of power. But can it be said (you continue) that even in the times of the greatest darkness, the Roman pontiffs were not generally distinguished by superior virtue and superior acquirements? Collectively taken, let them be compared with their contemporary princes in every age, and most assuredly they will not suffer in the comparison."†... Bad, Sir, as some of the contemporary princes were, the worst of them would be scandalized by such a comparison. The Popes, during some centuries, are for their personal vices only to be paralleled by the Roman Emperors; and the excess and

* Lenfant, Con. de Pise, i. 59. † Page 96.

extravagance of their depravity is to be explained only by the same cause.

Sir, I have no pleasure in contemplating the dark side of human nature. With your St. Norbert* I feel and know that it is good to believe in goodness. Even if my religion did not teach me on every occasion to form the most charitable judgement, inclination and habit would lead me always to look at things in their best and cheerfullest aspect; and I thank God, accounting it among my many blessings, that this youthful temper has continued with me into the yellow leaf. But it is sometimes necessary to read lectures upon the morbid anatomy of the human heart; and part of the infamy deservedly awarded to public and enormous offenders is, that they should thus be delivered over for moral dissection.

Some few years ago a certain party in this country used to insist that a government, in its transactions with other nations, should act without regard to the personal character

* *Tanto procul dubio quisque fidelis piusque animus, ad omnipotentis Dei amorem et gratiam promerendam, propius accedit, quanto bonum, quod de alio audit, facilius credit, idque sibi ab eodem Domino Deo conferri optat et sperat. Qui non credit, non imitatur; qui vero non imitatur, nunquam perveniet.* Vita S. Norberti, Acta SS.

of those who were at the head of affairs there; the conduct of states, they argued, being directed by national policy, not by the determinations of individual temper. This was a fallacious argument urged by inept politicians in a bad cause. The opinions of the ablest statesmen are in direct opposition to it; disproved as it is by the whole tenour of history, from which the maxims of true policy must be deduced. Under all forms of government, whether of the many, the few, or the one, the course of things takes its bias from the character of the rulers, and this more especially in arduous times. Forms of government, therefore, are more or less objectionable as they are more or less liable to this defect: and this is one reason why despotism is the worst form, it being the sure effect of great power to enfeeble or inebriate weak minds, and to infuriate or madden wicked ones. But the history of the Popes gives occasion to something more than political deductions. If other proof were wanting, it would afford irrefragable evidence that the Papal system which has been imposed upon the world as Christianity, is false. It is with love and adoration that we contemplate the Founder of our faith at his nativity in a stable; but who can be persuaded that his successors and repre-

sentatives are to be found in the sty, not of Epicurus, but of all abominations.

So long as the Bishops of Rome were contented to abide within the limits of their just authority, they were neither better nor worse than other Prelates, and reasonably may be believed to have been wiser and more religious than ordinary men. It was when their pretensions were at the highest that their personal characters were at the worst. You have spoken of their superior acquirements, Sir. At first there might seem cause to wonder wherefore this superiority did not always exist, and always in a far greater degree. The poor child whom the priests of Tibet, in their well-compacted system of imposture, exhibit as their earthly and incarnate God, is always one in whom they perceive the surest indications of docility and intellect. And undoubtedly in like manner Apis was always a bull of the best breed in Egypt: though, if in this age of religious restorations Bull-worship were restored, and the election thrown open to other countries, a good friend of mine, who has been pleased to name some of his stock after the worthies of my poems, would produce a Sockburn Short-horns from Grassy-nook which should put the best bull of Basan out of the field.

But neither in the case of Apis, nor of the Dalai-Lama, were any undue practices used in the election; the one was as passive in it, and as unconscious of what was going on as the other; and both bull-calf and bull-child (to use a Chinese idiom) were fairly chosen according to the qualifications required. Has it been so at Rome? If you call to mind the intrigues within and without the Conclave, the popular tumults, the private solicitations, the sinister motives and the dextrous manœuvres, which usually accompanied the choice of a Pope, you must be conscious that, during the busier ages of the Papacy, the election was any thing rather than immaculate. And yet methinks an immaculate election should seem as necessary for the purity of the faith, or at least for the pretensions of the Papal Church, as that exemption from original sin which the Seraphic schoolmen first claimed for the Virgin Mary, and which one, who is less to be suspected of superstition than the hardest head that ever wore a cowl, would fain have persuaded the Council of Constance to establish for St. Joseph also. I speak of no less a personage than Gerson, the leader of the liberal Romanists in his age; who maintained that the Church* might

* Lenfant, Council of Constance, ii. 310.

err, and that the Pope must submit to the authority of a General Council; who scrupled not to tell one of those Councils that they used double weights* and measures, and weighed things in unequal balances; who treated the revelations† of his day as contemptuously as you, Sir, I trust, would do those of La Sœur Nativité, notwithstanding the sanction which this last new and impious imposture has obtained from certain English Benedictines, Jesuits, and Vicars-General... with Dr. Milner at their head; who went farther than you, Sir, in freedom of opinion, for he asserted that miracles‡ had ceased; who publicly expressed a wish that Nunneries should be abolished,§ because they had become brothels; who arraigned the corruptions and the rapacity of the higher clergy so boldly, that he has been classed among the precursors of the Reformation: would you desire a more liberal Romanist?.. But who preached things which he admitted|| were not true, and yet he

* C. of Constance, i. vii.

† Ib. i. 470.

‡ C. de Pise, ii. 226.

§ C. of Constance, ii. 97.

|| Ib. i. 609. "We have no sentence or declaration of their Church against *pious frauds* (says Stillingfleet); but we have large confessions from their own writers of the practice of them, and the good they are designed for; viz. to keep up the

preached them, because he said they might piously be believed; who proposed to increase the stock of superstitious notions, by appointing a festival for the Immaculate* Conception of St. Joseph; who complained that the heretics† had the Bible in their own tongue; who called out for the axe to hew down heresies and heretics, and the fire‡ to consume them, ..say-

devotion of the people. John Gerson honestly confesseth this to be the end of the legends and miracles of the Saints, and their visions and revelations so much talked of in the Roman Church, viz. to stir up the piety and good affections of the people: for these things,§ saith he, are not proposed by the Church to be believed as true; but they are rather to consider them as things that might be done, than as things that were done. And it is no matter, saith he, if some things that are really false, are piously believed, so that they be not believed as false, or known to be false at the same time. And I wish he had added one condition more, viz. that the infallibility of the Church be not to be proved by them. ..But are we not like to meet with credible testimony in such things, where the most honest and learned among them think it is no great matter whether they be true or false?"—*Second Disc. in Vindic. of the Protestant Grounds of Faith.* 1673. p. 595.

* C. de Pise, ii. 202.

† C. of Constance, ii. 109.

‡ C. de Pise, ii. 226.

§ Gerson. Declar. Veritatum, t. i. p. 415.

ing it was *merciful* cruelty thus to stay the plague of heretical opinions; and who promoted the martyrdom of Hus and of our Jerome with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength:*... Would you desire a more consistent one?

An intelligent Mahommedan or Chinese would not be disposed to think favourably of a representative government, if in England he were taken to the hustings during a contested popular election; still less if the whole process of such an election were explained to him. He would be more likely to apprehend that the candidates must be in some degree tainted by the means which they employ, and that some evil effect must be felt in an assembly the members of which are thus returned, than to understand the complicated nature of our political system, and be persuaded that there are evils which act as correctives, and have their use. I know not whether subtlety has even pretended to show that good arose from the manner in which the Popes

* The portrait of Gerson, which is given in Lenfant's *Concile de Pise*, is curiously characteristic. It is like the face of an ill-tempered lion, half sulky and half sick. Picart seems to have seen the resemblance, for he has placed a lion below, and, that the less ferine character of the beast may not be too apparent, has brought the mane over the face to conceal it.

were chosen before they were shorn of their strength; or if you will argue that there was always an interference of the Spirit to sanctify the results of elections in which it certainly had no share. We learn from authentic history that the Popes were chosen, not for their virtues, not for their abilities, not for their erudition, but sometimes because they were old or sickly, and therefore likely soon to make a vacancy for some who in that expectation gave their votes; sometimes through their own intrigues, sometimes by family influence, and latterly by the management of ambassadors, as the interest of the Kings Most Catholic or Most Christian predominated. From the time when the Roman Catholic Sovereigns began* regu-

* Muratori has introduced in his Annals some observations upon this subject, which are little to the liking of his Roman Editor. Speaking of the tenth century, he says, "*Fa il Cardinal Baronio un giusto lamento sopra l' infelice ed obbrobrioso secolo, di cui andiamo parlando, con attribuire spezialmente la sorgente di tanti disordini, e mostri, che si viddero sul Trono di Pietro, alla prepotenza de' Principi secolari, che vollero mischiarsi nell' elezione de' Romani Pontefici, concludendo in fine,* Nihil penitus Ecclesiæ Romanæ contingere posse funestius, tetrius nihil atque lugubrius, quàm si Principes Seculares in Romanorum Pontificum electionem manus immittant. *L' osservazione del saggio e zelante Porporato è bella e buona; e noi dobbiam desiderar che sempre duri la libertà ben regolata, e da tanti secoli introdotta nel sacro Collegio de' Cardinali di eleggere il*

larly to interfere in these elections, the scandal which till then had existed in the Papal Church, was abated, as far as concerned the Popes themselves. Respect was then paid to decency and to character in the choice, ..considerations which the Cardinals, when left to themselves, had treated with as much contempt in the conclave as in their private lives. Weak

Romano Pontefice. Ma qui è fuor di sito l' episonema dello zelante Annalista: perchè i malanni della Sedia Apostolica in questi tempi vennero dai Romani stessi, e non dai Principi secolari. Per lo contrario in que' secoli, ne' quali il Clero, il Senato, i Militi, cioè i Nobili, e il Popolo Romano aveano tutti mano nell' elezione del sommo Pontefice, e nascevano benespesso contese, e scisme, non fu già creduto un abominevol ripiego, che i buoni Imperadori adoperassero il loro consenso, per frenare in questa guisa le gare, le fazioni, e le prepotenze degli elettori. Abbiam veduto, che il buon Papa Giovanni IX. conobbe canonico e necessario questo freno. Abbiamo anche veduto tanti buoni ed ottimi Papi *eletti in addietro; nè si può dire, che nocesse alla santa Sede l' esservi intervenuto il consentimento degli* Augusti. *Anzi allorchè non vi furono Imperadori, o non ebbero essi alcuna parte nell' elezion de' nuovi Pontefici, Roma si trovò piena di mali umori, allora succederono i disordini più grandi, come si può conoscere consultando la storia della Chiesa. Lodiamo dunque i Principi buoni, e i tempi presenti, e biasimiamo i Principi cattivi di tutti i tempi; e rendiamo grazie a Dio, che da tanti anni in quà camminano di sì buon concerto le elezioni de' Romani Pontefici, e questi buoni, e questi di edificazione, e non più di scandalo al Popolo di Dio, senza che vi sia bisogno di freno ai disordini per mezzo della potenza secolare.*—Annali, t. v. p. ii. pp. 14-16. Roma, 1787.

men were sometimes chosen, but not wicked ones. Their temper mitigated as their influence diminished, though the spirit of their Church remained the same; and in consequence the hostile feeling wherewith Englishmen were wont to regard them has altogether ceased. It is to the doctrines and to the spirit of the Romish Church that we are irreconcileably opposed, not to the Pope as its head. His effigy, therefore, no longer appears in our November holyday; and Guy Faux... while I am penning this sentence, figures without a companion, at an auto-da-fè in every town and village throughout England, as the representative of the Joint Stock Gunpowder Company for which he was agent and inspector.

Upon such persons as the later Popes, when they are really religious men, the effect of their situation must be truly pitiable. If they never at any time feel a doubt concerning the validity of the bills which they draw upon the other world,.. if they are quite confident that the inexhaustible Treasury of Merits is at their absolute disposal, and that the gate of heaven opens or shuts as they turn the key,..still something like the Methodistic feeling of assurance must be necessary to support them under a sense of the fearful discrepancy between the character with

which the Romish world invests them, and that in which they appear to their own souls. The Pope of Tibet may in entire simplicity believe himself to be what all around him assure him that he is, because from childhood he has been trained and treated in that capacity, and so secluded from all intercourse with the world, that he supposes all men acknowledge his divinity. But the Dalai-Lama of Rome knows that his pretensions are disputed by half Christendom, and denied by it upon the authority of those very Scriptures which he produces as the charter of his power. I speak of those who were sincere believers, as well as inoffensive and gentle-hearted men. But as John Wilkes by his own avowal was never a Wilkite, so I may be permitted to doubt whether some of the best Popes were really Papists. It is notorious what the worst were; and not the worst alone, but some of those whom even Protestant historians continue at this day to favour or to flatter. But for the Thundering Popes, the Hildebrands, the Innocents, the Johns, and the Borgias, their vices were aggravated by the tremendous situation wherein they were placed. Some of these men notoriously believed the whole of revealed religion to be a fable, they had good apparent cause for this opinion, when

they played the part of impostors in it themselves, and the daring impiety of their unbelief displayed itself not more in the blasphemy of their claims, than in the desperate flagitiousness of their lives. Nicholas the Fifth's truism* that they who do not believe in God, stand in no fear of him, was never more plainly exemplified than in the conduct of his immediate predecessors.†

Some of the Popes have been charged with offences of which they were innocent. Silvester, for example, was no magician; and it

* Lenfant, C. de Basle, ii. 284.

† All writers of that age were not so cautious as Olivier de la Marche, who says, when speaking of the Council of Basil, *singulierement fust creé iceluy Concile à l'encontre et à la reformation de Pape Eugene; et publiquement luy mirent avant a l'encontre de sa vie et de sa personne plusieurs cas tels et de tels gestes que je n'en veux escrire ne ramentevoir, mais je laisse reciter et escrire a ceux qui plus sagement sçavent coucher et mettre en souvenir, ou ramentevance chose de tel poix et de telle efficace: car à toucher à la fame et au renom de si sainte et haute personne en Chrestienté comme nostre Sainct Pere le Pape, l'entendement se doit arrester de frayeur, la langue doit barbusser de crainte, l'encre seicher, le papier fendre, et la plume pleyer par doute dangereux et plain de peril d'encourir, ou enchérir au danger d'inobedience et de faute, a l'encontre des commandemens et ordonnances de nostre sainte et salutaire mere et ressourse l'Eglise triumphante.*—L. i. c. vi. p. 160. Lovain, 1645.

may be doubted whether John XII. actually drank the Devil's health; for if he did, it was extremely ungrateful* in the Devil to knock him on the head. But John XXIII. denied none of the crimes† for which he was deposed; he assented to and ratified "of his certain knowledge" the sentence in which they were enumerated, and I think, Sir, you cannot but recollect what the catalogue contained. Yet, after this public conviction, with all his fresh and flagrant infamy upon him, his successor made him a Bishop and a Cardinal, appointed him Dean of the Sacred College, and gave him a place next to himself in all public ceremonies. The ashes of Hus and of Jerome were cast into the Rhine, but the remains of this man‡ were

* This was by no means the worst offence for which he was deposed. Having reinstated himself by force, he began to cut off hands and noses, and to cut out tongues, when he was cut off himself, being caught in bed with a Roman Lady, and knocked in the head. The Devil is said to have struck the fatal blow; but it is well observed, in the Universal History, that the authors who say this have not mentioned whether he appeared in the form of the lady's husband. (vol. ix. 543. folio edition.) The husband, however, and not the Devil, is mentioned by Illescas, t. i. ff. 160. Barcelona, 1606.

† Lenfant, C. of Constance, i. 309.

‡ F. Maimbourg calls the submission of this monster to his

honoured by Cosmo de' Medici with sumptuous obsequies! In what unequal balances, Sir, have you weighed the Popes and the Reformers! What double weights and measures have you used when Dunstan or Luther, Becket or Cranmer, a head of the English or of the Romish Church is in the scale! When you hint at the failings of certain Popes, who but must admire the edifying tenderness of your expressions! "It is not denied," you say, "that a few of them in the long list were stained with vice." A *few*, Sir, and *stained* only! In what part of their characters is the white spot to be found? Were you thinking, when this delicate phraseology was penned, of those who flourished under favour of Theodora and Marozia? of those who contended for the chair of St. Peter during the long schism, when their actions were noted by each other? or of their successors who lived in the broader day-light of the fifteenth century? Sir, there have been so many of them so bad, that the boldest and best-armed advocates of your cause, conscious of what Muratori calls

sentence "so christian, so heroical an action, and so worthy of a holy penitent, that even if he had committed greater crimes, it was enough to have cancelled the remembrance of them, and procured him a crown of immortal glory!"—Lenfant, C. of Constance, i. 310.

the *brutte conseguenze*,* have been fain to deduce an argument from their very crimes, that the Papacy is of divine appointment! Baronius† and Bellarmine reason from the wickedness of some, as the un-queen'd, un-sexed, un-Lutheranized Christina did from the imbecility of others, that when such men were at the head,

* Annali, t. v. p. 2. 51.

† *Attesa la mancanza delle memorie storiche di que' tempi, si rendè a noi impossibile il formare un giusto carattere de' Romani Pontefici, che nel secolo decimo governarono la Chiesa universale. Ma posto ancora che ammetter si debba per vero tutto ciò, che de' loro vizii e difetti si racconta, la sregolata condotta de' medesimi nulla pregiudica allo splendore, ed all' autorità della cattedra di S. Pietro. Anzi come opportunamente avvertono i venerabili Cardinali Baronio e Bellarmino (quegli* ad ann. 900, num. i. *e* ad ann. 912. num. viii. seqq. *e altrove; questi* in præfat. ad libros de Summo Pontifice) *un fortissimo argomento si ricava a mostrare evidentemente, che il Romano Pontificato non è opera umana, ma divina, contro cui le porte dell' Inferno in niun modo possono prevalere, giacchè se opera umana fosse, non avrebbe retto ad urti e scosse tanto violenti.*

In this manner does the Roman editor of Muratori's Annals (t. v. p. 2. 112.) endeavour to counteract the impression which the narrative of that faithful writer, cold and dry as his narrative is, cannot but make upon every ingenuous and reflecting mind. What Jeremy Taylor says of the Expurgatory Indices is applicable to this subject also: "the serpent, by being so curious a defender of his head, shows where his danger is, and by what he can be most readily destroyed." (Vol. x. 135. Bp. Heber's edition.)

of the Romish Church, nothing but the immediate protection of Heaven could have preserved it. You have told us, Sir, that you love a strong argument; but methinks this is too strong even for your palate. It is above proof.

The ship, says Baronius, must have foundered in the storm, if Christ had not been asleep on board.* Never was the *porporato*

* The passage is curious, the facts being as fairly confessed as the argument is unsound. "*Quæ tunc facies sanctæ Ecclesiæ Romanæ! quam fœdissima cùm Romæ dominarentur potentissimæ æquè ac sordidissimæ meretrices! quarum arbitrio mutarentur sedes, darentur Episcopi, et quod auditu horrendum et infandum est, intruderentur in Sedem Petri earum amasii pseudopontifices, qui non sint nisi ad consignanda tantùm tempora in catalogo Romanorum Pontificum scripti. Quis enim à scortis hujusmodi intrusos sine lege legitimos dicere posset Romanos fuisse Pontifices? Nusquam Cleri eligentis, vel postea consentientis aliqua mentio, Canones omnes pressi silentio, decreta Pontificum suffocata, proscriptæ antiquæ traditiones, veteresque in eligendo summo Pontifice consuetudines, sacrique ritus, et pristinus usus prorsus extincti. Sic vendicaverat omnia sibi libido, sæculari potentiâ freta, insaniens, æstro percita dominandi. Dormiebat tunc planè alto (ut apparet) sopore Christus in navi, cùm hisce flantibus validis ventis, navis ipsa fluctibus operiretur. Dormiebat, inquam, qui ista non videre dissimulans, sineret sic fieri, dum non exurgeret vindex. Et quod deterius videbatur, deerant qui Dominum sic dormientem clamoribus excitarent discipuli, stertantibus omnibus. Qualesnam reris delectos ab hisce monstris presbyteros et diaconos Cardinales fuisse putandum; cum nihil tam naturæ insitum sit, quàm unumquemque sibi similem generare? quos in omnibus iis à quibus delecti*

more unfortunate in a metaphor; for in the age whereof he speaks, his Church was not assailed by any temporal enemies, and as for heretical opinions,* there was not even a breath to break

fuerint, consensisse dubitare quis poterit? imitatosque esse ipsos, sectatosque eorum vestigia quis non facile credat? et optasse hos omnes Dominum dormuisse semper, et numquam in judicium surrecturum, evigilaturum numquam ad ipsorum cognoscenda et punienda facinora, quis non intelligat?...

Scandalum verò ille tantum patitur in hâc horridâ tempestate, qui fidei expers, ad fluctus obruentes navim intentus oculis, Domini in eâdem commorantis navi penitus obliviscitur, atque inesse non putat, illud impium mente volvens; Quomodo scit Deus, et si est scientia in excelso: sicut impii Novatores Evangelicæ Fidei, quam profitentur exortes, talibus obrui fluctibus videntes Petri naviculam, non esse in eâ Christum, impiè blasphemantes; posseque eam mergi, immo demersam, contra Christi promissiones obganniunt: planè cæci atque cæcorum duces, cum Christum in navi dormientem non vident, nec sentiunt Dei præsentiam in grandi miraculo. Quodnam hoc dices? Evidens planè illud, quod cum navicula sic esset operta fluctibus, mersa non est, onusta tanto pondere peccatorum. Cur non mersa? cur non vortice maris absorta? quia Christus semper est inventus in eâ; alioqui planè perire necesse erat, si curâ tantùm hominum regeretur. Sed quia Christus in eâ, et ipsa in Christo Romana Ecclesia semper fuit, hactenus incolumis perseverat. Non mersa igitur operta hisce fluctibus navis, quia in ipsâ, licet dormiens, Christus erat; quod velis, nolis, necesse est fatearis, infidelis et impie, qui hujuscemodi impietate tuâ majores quàm venti isti immittis fluctus in navim, Deo magis odibilis impietate, quàm ipsi libidine.—Ann. Eccl. t. x. pp. 679, 80. Ed. 1603.

* Muratori remarks this, after speaking of the ignorance which prevailed in Italy during the tenth century, "*Per cagion*

the dead and pestilential calm. The danger was wholly from the riotry and furious drunkenness of the crew. And when this Cardinal applied to the Papacy that promise which was made to the Church of Christ, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, had he no secret whisperings, no inward consciousness that from this quarter it had nothing to apprehend, for Satan is not divided against himself, . .

di questa ignoranza, e per gli esempli de' viziosi, che erano cresciuti a dismisura, si aumentè di molta la corruzion de' costumi, e ne pati la Religione stessa, divenuta per così dir materiale e senza spirito. Non già che nascessero Eresie, perchè il Populo e i Pastori della Chiesa tenevano saldo quel che aveano appreso della Fede Christiana: ma perchè pochi leggevano, pochi spiegavano le divine Scritture: e il non udire inculcata nelle prediche la parola di Dio, e le sue gran verità, lasciava libero il campo ai vizi, e alle superstizioni; che tali erano il duello, e varie altre pruove, appellate Giudizi di Dio, ed inventate per iscoprire, come sciocchamente si credeva, la verità delle cose, e l'innocenza, o reità delle persone, per tacer altre cose. Allora ancora più che mai si spacciarono miracoli falsi; si formarono varie Leggende di Santi, che oggidì si scorgono favolose, e però andò in decadenza anche la disciplina monastica nella maggior parte de' monisteri, massimamente perchè quei sacri luoghi venivano divorati dai Principi, e dati in Commenda ad Abbati anche secolari, e scandalosi; e i Vescovi, e fin gli stessi Romani Pontefici più a distruggere che ad edificare erano rivolti, stante la voga in cui cominciò ad essere la simonia, l'incontinenza, il dover andare alla guerra, per nulla dire di tanti altri disordini di questi secoli barbarici."—Annali, t. v. p. 2. 111.

else how should his kingdom stand? There is a confidence in arguing, which makes men feel that an advocate knows the strength and relies on the justice of his argument; but audacious arguments always give reason for suspecting the sincerity* of those by whom they are advanced.

Baronius, Sir, would never have reasoned thus, had he not been conscious what *brutte conseguenze* may be drawn from the history of the Papal Church, even when such sturdy partizans as himself and Illescas are the historians, and all possible precautions† of revision, cor-

* "Many men," says Ben Jonson, "believe not themselves what they would persuade others." One of the best and wisest and most learned men that the world has ever seen, thought this was the case with Baronius and Bellarmine. He says: "*Dii est, cum persuasi mihi, nullum ad hanc diem fuisse seculum, quo æque illustratæ essent omnes artes ac disciplinæ; neque rursus, quo ita aperte veritas oppugnaretur. Priorum seculorum miseranda erat barbaries et imperitia: nostra hæc ætas ut scientiâ, ita malitiâ abundat:* IGNORANTIA ENIM PECCARE BELLARMINOS, BARONIOS, SERRARIOS, NUNQUAM ADDUCAR UT CREDAM. *Illud potius existimem; cæcitatem hodie plerorumque δεήλατον esse παθος, et malæ mentis justissimam ἀντιμισθιαν.*"—Casauboni Epist. p. 579.

† What care was exercised with the *Historia Pontifical y Catholica* of Illescas may be supposed from the licenses prefixed to the second and later editions. "*Por comission del Real Consejo de la sancta Inquisicion, vieron esta Historia, y la limaron, y la pusieron en perfection, para mayor seguridad de las personas que no saben mucho, Fr. Juan de Leon, Carmelita Obispo de Columbria, y Fr. Phelipe de Urrias, Rector del Collegio de S. Gre-*

rection, and expurgation have been used. It was because the Romanists knew the force of such consequences that they brought their execrable imputations against Henry VIII. and against Elizabeth, and assailed the characters of Luther and Calvin and Beza and our own Cranmer with rabid malignity. To this day they continue to rake in the old kennels of slander for filth with which to asperse the fathers of the Reformed Churches; and this is done not by the Baddeleys and the Eusebius Andrewses alone, but by men who would feel themselves degraded were they to be named in such association. "*Crede mihi, nihil est mendacius odio, nihil vanius irâ, nihil fallacius invidiâ.*" Were these accusations as true as they have

gorio de Valladolid; sus pareceres fueron muy favorables, y con ellos se comenso a imprimir la segunda vez. This however was not enough; before the edition was finished, four other Masters in Theology, under the same authority, *la vieron, y acabaron de limar, y asseguraria de toda suerte de escrupulo, que de leerla se pudiera engendrar: sobre presupuesto que en ella no avia, ni nunca uvo error ninguno, ni cosa mal sonante, ni escandalosa, y que la intencion y buen zelo del Author era muy sano y sin scrupulo.* And finally a censor appointed by the Royal Council of his Majesty gives his opinion that *de la manera que agora va templada y revista puedese leer con toda seguridad.* As the book was written in the most flaming days of Papal power, by a Spanish Abbot, it would be curious to see what the alterations were which were made in it after its first publication.

been proved to be infamously and villainously false, the Protestant cause would be in no degree affected. We neither deify nor *quasi*-deify the head of our Church; we impute no infallibility to its founders; we neither canonize its martyrs and confessors, nor rely upon their merits, nor address our prayers to them. But you, Sir, have to reconcile the personal character of the so-called Vicar of Christ with the representative character that you acknowledge in him; you have to reconcile the pretensions of the Popes with their practices, their infallibility with their errors, their vice-deity with their crimes.

"The learned Jews," says South, "still made this one of the ingredients that went to constitute a prophet, that he should be *perfectus in moralibus*, a person of exact morals, and unblameable in his life; the gift of prophecy being a ray of such a light as never darts itself upon a dunghill." I think, Sir, you would not dispute the reasonableness of this opinion, if you were not apprehensive how it might be applied. For can we suppose, if the Roman Pontiff were what his advocates represent him, that less would be required for a Pope than for a Prophet? Might it not be expected that Heaven would so far interfere in the choice of its own accredited representative and plenipotentiary

on earth, as always to provide that the election should fall upon one whose former life had been at least blameless; or, by an unequivocal manifestation of its consent, that it should have made regeneration a necessary consequence of the appointment, so that the newly-created Pope with the title of Holiness should receive the grace, and put on sinless perfection as well as infallibility with his pontificals? If God delivered over the power and dominion in Heaven as well as Earth to the Roman Pontiff; if that Pontiff be indeed the living and oracular depository of the faith, the unerring expounder of what is written, and the sure preserver of those unwritten interpretations and additions which in the Romish Church are held of equal authority with Scripture,..if upon the Pope under God the salvation of all the faithful depends,..is it possible that these stupendous prerogatives should coexist with imbecility, with vice, with flagitious profligacy...with flagrant unbelief? Would the offence have been less for Cossa or Borgia to take upon themselves such an office, than for Uzzah to approach the ark? "The Holy Ghost," says Bishop Taylor, "never dwells in the house of passion." Will it dwell with ambition, with avarice, with impiety, with all the cardinal sins? For in their company

the Holy Spirit must have dwelt,..with all these sins in monstrous hypostasis it must have been united, if the pretensions of the Papal Church were true!

No, Sir, it is not through these broken conduits,..through these sinks and sewers that we can be content to receive the waters of life! We drink of them at the living well, at the fountain-head, at the Rock of Scripture from whence they flow pure, and will for ever flow. In Scripture it was that the truths of Christianity were preserved when the Popes were, what Baronius confesses them to have been, monsters of wickedness,..or, as you are pleased to qualify it, when they were "stained with vice;" ..when, in St. Bernard's words,* they had wolves instead of sheep for their flock, and Rome was the Devil's own pasture.† It is not there, Sir, that we must look for that Church to which the promise was made, nor for the

* *Scio ubi habitas, increduli et subversores sunt tecum. Lupi, non oves sunt, talium tamen tu pastor.*—De Consideratione, l. iv. c. iii. 885.

† *Si auderem dicere, dæmonum magis quàm ovium pascua hæc.* —Ib. c. ii.

What a picture of Rome does he set before the Pope! *Quem dabis mihi de totâ maximâ urbe qui te in Papam receperit, precio seu spe precii non interveniente? Et tunc potissimum volunt dominari cum professi fuerint servitutem. Fideles se spondent, ut*

head of that Church who made it. That Church is neither to be found under the Eastern Patriarch, nor the Western Pope. It existed among the Pyrenees and the Alps,..where the Albigenses have been destroyed with fire and sword; and where at this day the Vaudois in patience and in poverty bear testimony to the Gospel. It existed in Bohemia and in Britain; wherever two or three were gathered together in their Saviour's name, wherever the covenant of grace was accepted in meekness and in truth. It existed even among heretics and monks and friars,..more erring than all heretics,..wherever

opportunius fidentibus nocent. Ex hoc non erit consilium tibi a quo se arcendos putent, non secretum quo se non ingerant. Si stante præ foribus quoquam illorum, moram vel modicam fecerit ostiarius, ego tunc pro illo esse noluerim. Et nunc experire paucis, noverimne et ego vel aliquatenus mores gentis. Ante omnia sapientes sunt ut faciant mala, bonum autem facere nesciunt. Hi invisi terræ et cœlo, utrique injecere manus, impii in Deum, temerarii in sancta, seditiosi in invicem, æmuli in vicinos, inhumani in extraneos, quos neminem amantes amet nemo; et cum timeri affectant ab omnibus, omnes timeant necesse est. Hi sunt qui subesse non sustinent, præesse non norunt; superioribus infideles, inferioribus importabiles. Hi inverecundi ad petendum, ad negandum frontosi. Hi importuni ut accipiant, inquieti donec accipiant, ingrati ubi acceperint. Docuerunt linguam suam grandia loqui cum operentur exigua. Largissimi promissores, et parcissimi exhibitores. Blandissimi adulatores, et mordacissimi detractores. Simplicissimi dissimulatores, et malignissimi proditores.—Ib.

the errors of belief were involuntary and unavoidable, wherever the sacrifice was offered of a broken spirit and of a contrite heart. There was the Church of Christ; not in the ship of St. Peter, when that ship was manned by pirates, or floating at the mercy of the winds upon the Dead Sea, while the crew were carousing with harlots, or engaged in brawls and blood. If the Gates of Hell could have prevailed against the Church, it would have been by the agency of such a crew; and if by means of crusades, Inquisitions, leagues, massacres, conspiracies, assassinations, and armadas, they had prevailed, and the Reformation had been suppressed, England would now have been what Spain and Italy are, divided between superstition and atheism, in a state of moral leprosy and intellectual darkness.

Perhaps, Sir, you may expect that, when speaking of the Popes in general, I should take the opportunity of noticing your new version of an old story from Paulus Æmilius, and the triumphant manner in which you have rebuked me for so stating a proposition of Bellarmine's as to make its meaning appear diametrically opposite to the intention of the author, and to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. But I will not anticipate the order of your own

book. Those remarkable passages will come quite soon enough in course; and by this time it is probable that you may have felt some misgiving concerning both. You may have learnt from Mr. Blanco White the value of your verbal criticism upon Paulus Æmilius; "*vous devez vous défier de vous, quand vous êtes seul de votre avis.*" And with regard to Bellarmine, you may have found cause, I think, to distrust those upon whose credit in this (and in one other) instance, I hope and believe that you have relied. Had my purpose been merely to vindicate myself, by exposing the misrepresentations which affect me personally, it would have been an easy but an ungrateful task. A few pages might have sufficed. "There is a rebuke which is not comely:" and when such rebukes were to be dealt with, had I restricted myself to the task of vindication, I know not how the feeling of good will or the language of urbanity could have been maintained.

CONDUCT OF THE POPES TOWARD THE JEWS.

"PERSECUTED and plundered in England, France, Spain, Germany, and every other European state, the Jews (you say)* were uniformly protected by the Popes." Not uniformly, Sir. Generally, however, they were to a certain degree protected in the papal states. We will examine what the Popes have done in favour of this unhappy people, and what they have left undone. If ever there was a case in which the sin of omission was as deadly as that of commission; .. in which men became answerable before God for the crimes which they might and ought to have prevented, but did not prevent, it is here. I doubt not, Sir, but that you already apprehend the course of my argument.

The protection, such as it was, which the Popes, in their own States, contrary to their otherwise uniform intolerance, afforded this people, is remarkable: but Basnage, who notices, has at the same time satisfactorily explained it. There was nothing in Judaism either to alarm or irritate the Roman Pontiffs. It was an old religion, fallen and humbled and oppressed. The

* Page 97.

Jews had the privilege of antiquity to plead for their disbelief in the Christian dispensation; and as they did not specifically reject the Pope, they were innocent of what at Rome was accounted the great offence. Moreover they were an industrious and useful people; and the Papal Court, which has seldom been wanting in worldly wisdom, was the last place in Christendom to be influenced in its conduct by sincere bigotry, or to partake a popular superstition by which its own interest was not promoted.

When the Bishops of Rome began to assert that authority which, if they had always exerted it for useful purposes, and in a Christian spirit, they might still have retained, the Jews throughout Christendom were every where odious among the people, but frequently favoured by the sovereigns. Till that time the Popes are in no degree answerable for the outrages committed upon this most outraged and persecuted race; and after that time there are some honourable instances of interference on the part of Rome in their behalf. St. Gregory the Great censured those Bishops who molested them in the enjoyment of their privileges, and he forbade the Jewish converts to display their zeal by insulting the religion* which they had forsaken;

* Basnage, t. iv. 1403-7. M. Univ. Hist. vol. v. 519.

but by an injurious edict he decreed that the slaves of a Jew should obtain their freedom if they fled to a church and chose to be baptized. Alexander II. prevented the first King Ferdinand of Castille from extirpating the Jews in his dominions as a means of propitiating Heaven in his war against the Moors; and Innocent II. protected* them as far as he could against the crusaders, by exhorting and aiding him to which good work St. Bernard made some atonement for the intolerance† which he breathed at other times. Gregory IX. pursued at first a different course. At a time when he was on no friendly terms with the Emperor, he wrote to tell that Prince that he would do well in delivering over unbelieving Jews to the secular arm; but afterwards he had good sense enough to perceive that he had erred, and in several instances interfered to save them from popular persecution.‡ King St. Louis, whose bigoted, cruel, and canonized superstition has tended in no slight degree to produce some of the greatest errors and worst crimes§ of his descendants, was checked by the same Pontiff in

* Basnage, t. iv. 1403-7. M. Univ. Hist. vol. v. 534.

† Ib. 545.

‡ Basnage, t. v. 1795.

§ Ib. 1796. 1810.

his career of intolerance* against the Jews; and Alexander IV. endeavoured, though without effect, to render them a like protection in Naples.† John XXII. fell in for a while with the spirit of the age, and banished them from the Papal States, at the instigation, it is said, of a sister, who, being however more rapacious than fanatical, received an hundred thousand florins from them,‡ and induced him to revoke

* About 2500 are said to have been put to death before the Pope interfered, because they would not abjure their religion. (Basnage, v. 1810.) Well did King St. Louis deserve the panegyric pronounced upon him from the pulpit in Paris by the famous Boucher, and published by command of the Cardinal Legate, in his sermons upon the simulated conversion of Henri IV. After relating what had been the conduct of King St. Louis to the Count of Thoulouse, he proceeds thus: "*Et que direz vous, Messieurs, qui nous alleguez S. Loys, le juge des heretiques, le censeur des heretiques, le correcteur des heretiques, l'ennemy des heretiques, le persecuteur des heretiques, l'execrateur des heretiques, le dompteur des heretiques, la congnée des heretiques, le fleau des heretiques, le maillet des heretiques, le foudre des heretiques, la grosle et tempeste des heretiques, le contrepoison des heretiques, l'humiliateur des heretiques, le rangeur, le chappitreur, le raba-joye et chastieur, bref l'ange exterminateur des heretiques, et de tous fauteurs d'heretiques, de croyans et receleurs d'heretiques: qui alleguez dy-je, en faveur d'un heretique, et heretique des le ventre, et d'un ventre plus que heretique, et d'un relaps heretique, et d'un chef des heretiques?*"—p. 525.

† M. Univ. Hist. v. 564.

‡ Ib. 565. Basnage, v. 1799.

the unwise edict. They had a friend also in Clement VI.: that Pontiff, fiercely as he pursued the remnant of the Albigenses, interposed in behalf of the Jews, when they were persecuted on the absurd charge of poisoning the waters,* and gave them an asylum in his dominions. Martin V. published so equitable and tolerant a bull in their favour, that it was annulled by his successor,† upon a pretext that the Jews abused the liberty allowed them. Nicolas V. remonstrated against the measures which were pursued in Spain for converting them by force; and Alexander VI. not only gave them an asylum when they fled from that country, but compelled the Roman Jews to assist their brethren with the means of establishing themselves in his states:‡ it is the white speck in his character. And when it is added that Innocent XI. in the latter part of the 17th century, interfered with the Venetians§ in behalf of some oppressed Jews, the account in favour of the Popes will be closed.

The set off, Sir, is a heavy one; and I must remind you that the kindness, such as it was,

* Un. Hist. v. 565. Basnage, 2018.

† Lenfant, C. de Basle, i. 223.

‡ Ib. 2020. Univ. Hist. 577.

§ Ib. 600.

which in these instances was shown to the Jews, belongs to the Popes as individuals, whereas the evil of which we have now to speak, was inflicted upon them in the spirit and by the authority of the Romish Church. I find Pope Leo condemning the compulsory conversion * of this most injured people by King Sisebut, (one of those national crimes by which the Wisi-Goths deserved and brought on the destruction of their kingdom;) but I find him also decreeing that the miserable converts should be made to continue in the profession of a faith which it was impossible that they could believe when such just cause had been given them for hating it. I find Pope Gelasius excommunicating † those who appointed a Jew to any office of authority, and pronouncing it to be sacrilege, I find provincial decrees of the most intolerant, dissocializing,‡ and inhuman character, incor-

* Dec. P. i. Dist. 45. ff. 48.

† Dec. Par. ii. caus. xvii. q. iv. ff. 268.

‡ I am sorry to find Stephen Langton forbidding them to build Synagogues, and publishing an injunction "that no Christian should presume to have any communication with or sell them any provision, under pain of excommunication! The Bishops of Lincoln and Norwich pursued the same course. But these *pious* intentions were quickly defeated by the King, who dissolved their injunctions by a *precept* directed to the Mayor of Canterbury, the Sheriff of Lincoln, the Mayor and

porated in the Decretals as laws of the Romish Church: for example, that if a Christian woman should have intermarried with a Jew, she must be separated from him, unless he would renounce his religion and submit to be baptized:* that no one should eat with Jews, lodge with them, use the same bath with them, call them in in sickness, nor take medicine from their hands, on pain of deprivation for a clerk, and excommunication for a layman:† that converted Jews should not be permitted to hold any intercourse with those who continued unconverted; and that their children should be taken from them, and be bred up in monasteries, or in religious families,‡ lest they should imbibe their ancestral faith. There is a question whether this law relates to the children of Jews, or of new converts: in either case the inhumanity is the same, and in this place it weighs only as a grain of sand among the mountainous crimes of the Romish Church against this persecuted people.

Provost of Oxford, and the Bailiffs of Norwich, commanding all men to sell them victuals and other necessaries, under pain of imprisonment, any spiritual inhibition notwithstanding."—*Tovey's Anglia Judaica*, p. 82.

* Dec. P. ii. c. xxviii. q. i. ff. 348.

† Dec. P. ii. c. xxviii. q. i. ff. 349.

‡ Ib.

They were persecuted by that miscreant Pope John XXIII., who, having broken every command in the Decalogue, and committed every crime in the Newgate Kalendar, seems to have thought that persecution was a species of Romish charity which might serve to cover the multitude of his sins: .. he stirred up the Castillians, who required little instigation, against their Jewish countrymen; and practising in this instance as he preached, pursued the system which he recommended in the countries where he was acknowledged. On this occasion sixteen thousand Spanish Jews professed Christianity to save themselves from death, or utter ruin; very many suffered martyrdom at the stake, and very many were massacred* in endeavouring to escape from the curse of persecution which had now established itself in that country like an endemic and perennial plague. It even appears as if the very desire of converting them proceeded less from erroneous zeal, than from a spirit of deadly hatred: for upon the pretext of removing any suspicion that their conversion was simulated for the sake of preserving their property, there was a papal constitution† which required them to give up the whole of it before

* M. Un. Hist. v. 592.

† Lenfant, C. de Pise. ii. 47.

they could be baptized, and trust to Providence for their support till it might be deemed prudent to restore it, to them, in whole or in part. The Council of Constance modified this abominable law; not however from any feeling of its iniquity, (the Council being perfectly free from any feeling of that kind,) but because they said experience had shown that many Jews, who were otherwise inclined to become Christians, were hardened in their perfidiousness, by the fear of refunding what they had acquired by usury. So the Council decreed that for the future such converts should only forfeit half of their estates, real or personal, by way of restitution; and that the other half should mercifully be left them by way of alms, for supporting themselves, and bringing up their children, without being reduced to beggary. I have not so turned these expressions, Sir, as to make the language of the Council appear more detestable than it is. In this and in every other instance, a reference to my authorities * will show how faithfully they.

* *Quia ut expertum est, quamplurimi Judæi utriusque sexûs homines, per Usuram acquisita restituere metuentes, ad Christianismum suscipiendum alias satis inclinati, seorsim abierunt, in suâ perfidiâ tanquam desperati remanentes: ideò hæc Synodus sacrosancta decernit et ordinat, quod Judæus ad Fidem Catholicam venire volens, non nisi in quantum medietas ejus substantiæ, tam in mobi-*

have been followed. . . A common mode of plundering them had been by issuing Bulls* for compelling them to restore whatever sums they had received for interest.'

We come now to later times. Julius III. did with the Talmud what some of his predecessors had done with the writings of the Heathen Philosophers; and so strict a search was made for their books, that it is said all the Gemarrahs† in Italy were burnt by his order. Paul IV. hated them as heartily as if they had been heretics: he taxed them for the support of those among them who might be willing to become converts, confined them to a separate quarter of the towns in which they were settled, shut up their quarters every night; ordered them to wear a distinctive badge; forbade them to carry on any trade or business with the Christians, except in cloth: and compelled them to sell all their lands within six months,‡ so that

libus quam immobilibus, se extendit, eis a quibus usuras, si supersint, recepit, alioquin hæredibus, secundum proportionem usurarum receptarum, restituere teneatur; reliquâ medietate sibi, et suis liberis absque mendicitate educandis, in modum eleemosynæ, misericorditer derelictâ.—Lenfant, Council of Constance, ii. 388.

* Lenfant, C. de Pise, ii. 46.

† Univ. History, v. 594.

‡ Ib. 595.

they did not obtain a fifth part of their value... After this he was on the point of expelling them from his dominions upon the declaration of some converted Jewesses that they were possessed, and that the Jews, in revenge for their conversion, had sent the Devils into them. A Benedictine obtained this confession from the Evil Spirits by the usual process, and reported it to the Pope, who was proceeding to these violent measures in consequence, when happily a Jesuit interfered, and took on this occasion the part of common sense and humanity. He ventured to doubt whether, under such circumstances, a detachment of Devils would be placed under the Jews' orders; and a few stripes, which were administered upon his suggestion, drew from the demoniacs a truer avowal than holy water and the formula of exorcism had drawn from the Devils within them. They confessed that they had been suborned to act this part by certain persons about the Papal Court, who expected to obtain grants from the property which would be confiscated in consequence. Upon this discovery the Pope blest God that the Jesuit had saved him from the commission of a great crime,* and said that thenceforth he

* Basnage, v. 2027.

would pray for the conversion of the Jews, but never molest them more.

That fierce bigot Pius V. sent out a roaring bull against them, accusing them of magic* among other things, and expelling them from all places in his dominions, except Rome and Ancona. For this exception he assigned two reasons, one of which was that of a Pope, and the other that of a Politician. The first was that he retained them in his capital, in order that the Christians, by seeing them, might be reminded of our Saviour's sufferings, and that they themselves might be in the way of conversion, and become less wicked by living in the vicinity of the Popes: the other was because they were useful in carrying on a trade with the Levant,† and in contributing to the revenue. This Bull was repealed by his successor, but re-enacted by Clement VIII. who permitted them however to establish themselves once more at Avignon,‡ and there to enjoy what the Romish Church considers a liberal toleration, when it is to grant toleration and not to receive it. They were allowed to profess their religion there, and live after their own law; but they

* M. Univ. Hist. v. 596.

† Basnage, v. 2029.

‡ Ib. 2030. M. U. Hist. 596.

were compelled to wear yellow hats to distinguish them from other people, and every evening at seven o'clock they were locked up in their quarter.* Innocent XI. was alarmed at observing that the people of Rome began to frequent the Synagogues. It would be curious if the unreasonableness of the dominant religion, and the palpable disbelief of it which the higher clergy† took little pains to conceal, should, in the days of Popery, as is known‡ to have been the case in the days of Paganism, have led reflecting and pious minds to seek in the Jewish faith for that peace,§ which nothing

* This was an improvement upon what their condition had been in the beginning of the century, when they served as a standard whereby to measure degradation and oppression. *plus serfs et plus esclaves que les Chrestiens en Turquie, et les Juifs en Avignon*, is a comparison which occurs in the Satyre Menippée.

† Erasmus is sufficient authority for this. *At ego Romæ his auribus audivi quosdam abominandis blasphemiis debacchantes in Christum, et in illius apostolos, idque multis mecum audientibus, et quidem impunè. Ibidem multos novi, qui commemorabant se dicta horrenda audisse à quibusdam sacerdotibus aulæ Pontificiæ ministris, idque in ipsâ Missâ, tam clarè, ut ea vox ad multorum aures perveneriť.*—Epist. Lit. 26. Ep. xxxiv. 1456.

‡ Michaelis, Comm. on the Laws of Moses, iii. 429.

§ It is remarkable that Erasmus more than once expresses a fear lest Judaism should be extending itself. This can only have been because he perceived how likely it was that a rea-

but religious belief can impart. The ceremonies of the Synagogue (in England at least) are not remarkable for any imposing effect, nor even for decorum: Innocent, however, thought it necessary to forbid the Romans from attending there, to impose a fine of twenty crowns for the offence, and to threaten the offenders with excommunication. This Pope made some alteration* in the means which Gregory XIII. had prescribed for furthering the conversion of the Jews. Gregory had appointed a weekly sermon on Saturdays, at which a third part of all the Jews in Rome above twelve years old were compelled to attend, the subject being always the truth of Christianity, and the sinfulness of their unbelief. It may be supposed how willingly they attended, and how devoutly they listened: they even testified their dislike by committing certain irreverences in the church. To prevent such profanation, Innocent gave order that the sermons should be preached in an unconsecrated building; that the auditors might not be unnecessarily offended, he enjoined the preacher in his prayer to pronounce the

sonable faith, resting upon sure records, might attract persons who were disgusted with the gross fables and grosser practices of the Romish Church.

* M. Un. Hist. v. 599.

names of Jesus and Mary in a low voice; and to keep them silent during the discourse, he stationed a beadle who was to walk between the benches with a long wand in his hand,* and rap those over the knuckles whom he observed either talking† or smiling.

Were we now, Sir, to strike a balance, the stock of merits, on the score of humanity toward the Jews, to be carried to the Popes' account, would not suffice for such an indulgence as may be bought for sixpence with a print of N. Senhora de Nazareth, or any other privileged image of the polyonymous Virgin. But there remain two prominent parts of this subject which have not yet been touched on; and both are counts in that indictment for imposture and wickedness, which history prefers against the Roman Catholic Church. During those ages when the Jews were objects of popular hatred throughout Christendom, and when the slightest excitement sufficed for setting the rabble loose to butcher them and sack their

* Basnage, v. 2045.

† N.B. "The Pope has revived, in all their former strictness, the laws against the Jews. They are obliged to dwell in a certain quarter of Rome only, and to wear a distinguishing badge; the men a yellow covering on their hats, and the women a yellow ribbon on the breast."—*Morning Herald*, Nov. 16, 1825.

houses, a common pretext for such atrocities was to assert that they had crucified a Christian child, or insulted a crucifix, or profaned a consecrated wafer, and that the murder or the sacrilege had been discovered by miracle. A confession of the imputed crime was forced from the parties by torture,* after which they were put to the cruellest death that exasperated bigotry could devise. The supposed victim was then made a popular Saint, and the miraculous image, or carnified and bleeding host, became a popular object of devotion at their respective altars. Such instances, as you know, Sir, are numerous: I believe they have occurred in every country where the Papal power has been acknowledged, to the reproach of all; and in every instance the imposture and the crime have been sanctioned and appropriated by the Roman Catholic Church. Regardless alike of probability and humanity, the local ecclesiastical authorities entertained these charges, inconsistent, absurd, monstrous, and impossible as

* ... *examinatis et* enormiter *quæstionatis* are the significant words in the account of that miraculous Wafer, which stands at this day as an object of adoration upon its altar in the Church of St. Gudule at Brussels. There it remains, after more than four centuries, a memorial of some of the most atrocious cruelties that ever were perpetrated in the name of God, and a proof that the Romish Church at this day feels neither shame for its old impostures, nor compunction for its crimes.

they were,..contented with such proof as could be wrung from flesh and blood by the extremity of torture: and the Popes encouraged all this by approving what had been done. They confirmed the people by their authority,..an authority pretending to be infallible, and received as such,..in a credulity and a superstition which hardened their hearts. New Saints upon the faith of such stories were added to the kalendar,...new services, in which these palpable and atrocious falsehoods were recited, were inserted in the Breviary; and the tales concerning the Wafer were published *ad confundendum eos, qui isto tempore Venerabili Eucharistiæ Sacramento impiè derogabant.** Volumes, Sir, have been filled with such tales, all from the same mint of imposture, all bearing the stamp of the same impiety. The motives for inventing them have been as palpable as the frauds themselves are gross, and, what is of no small importance, there is evidence to show that this was understood and exposed at the time.†

* Basilica Bruxellensis, P. ii. p. 133.

† *In sacramento apparet caro, interdum humanâ procuratione, interdum operatione diabolicâ,* said Alexander of Ales. This indeed was an old trick, and St. Irenæus reports that it was done by Marcus, that great heresiarch, that by his prayer he caused the eucharistical wine to appear as if it was turned into blood.—*Jeremy Taylor,* vol. x. 491.

When Sixtus IV. canonized one of these imaginary Saints, the mischief of thus accrediting such a legend was so obvious that the Venetian government remonstrated against it, and declared its belief that the whole story was a fable,* trumped up at Trent (the seat of the supposed Martyr) for a purpose which the rulers of that city were ashamed to own.

* Basnage, v. 2019. M. Un. Hist. v. 593. There are two letters of Sixtus IV. upon this subject in the larger collection of Martene and Durand, t. ii. 1512. 1516. One is to the Bishop of Trent, telling him that, though he has no doubt all things have been done rightly and juridically in this business, *non desunt tamen plerique principes, qui factum hoc quodam modo improbent et accusent, et in aliam partem rem accipiant quam accipi debeat, nec tantum de tuâ fraternitate, sed de apostolicâ sede ob id quæri videantur.* The other is addressed to all the authorities throughout Italy, *ut Simonem puerum a Judæis interfectum pro sancto haberi prohibeant;* it complains that books and pictures were sold, and sermons preached, instigating the people against the Jews, and says that an inquiry into the affair was then pending. The inquiry ended in canonizing St. Simon. The reader who consults Mr. Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints will see it asserted there that the fact was fully proved upon the Jews, and that God confounded all their endeavours to prevent the discovery. But if he will examine the details in the *Acta SS.* (Mart. t. iii. pp. 494-502.) he will see that there was neither proof, nor shadow of proof, except a confession forced by tortures so extreme that one of the parties died in consequence; and that no person who ventures to use his understanding could for a moment entertain a story so utterly improbable in all its parts.

E. F.

This, Sir, is part of that conduct toward the Jews, for which (overlooking this part) you require that credit should be given to the heads of the Romish Church! Must we not distinguish between the Popes and the Papal Government in this matter of the Jews, and ascribe to them in their temporal capacity the protection and semi-toleration which was sometimes bestowed, while for canonizing such martyrs as St. Hugh of Lincoln, St. Simon of Trent, and St. Wernher of Bacharach, and giving their sanction to the miracles of carnification, they are responsible in their spiritual and infallible character?

The second count relates to the proceedings of the Inquisition, with special regard to the Jews. You have told us, Sir, that the proceedings of that tribunal were "very objectionable."* Objectionable! "the word is well cull'd, choice, sweet, and apt, I do assure you, Sir!"† And this is all that you have said concerning the Inquisition! Little, however, as it is, and oleaginous as is the expression, had it been uttered within the jurisdiction of the Holy Office, it would have been found, in your Bishop Nix's phrase, "to savour of the frying-pan." There is proof that the Popes them-

* Page 152. † Shakspeare.

selves (with few exceptions) thought this mode of dealing with the Jews unnecessary, for they did not pursue the same course in their own dominions. There is evidence even that one* of them thought it impolitic at least, if not inhuman. But they never interposed to prevent it. Sir, we know from the most moderate calculations,† founded upon authentic papers and sure data, that in Spain alone, from the year 1481 to the intrusion of Joseph Buonaparte, more than thirty thousand persons had been burnt by this tribunal, more than seventeen thousand burnt in effigy, more than two hundred and ninety thousand condemned to punishments, short of death, but which involved utter ruin, and entailed perpetual infamy upon their families... I have written the numbers, lest the reader, startled at their amount, should suspect that a cipher too much had slipt into the numerals. Of this prodigious number, by far the greater part suffered upon the charge of Judaism; it is within the mark to say nineteen out of twenty. While this merciless and perpetual persecution was carried on thus actively

* D. Luiz da Cunha, Carta ao Marco Antonio, MS.

† They may be seen in Llorente's Critical History of the Spanish Inquisition.

under the Catholic Kings of Spain, the Inquisition in Portugal was equally alert in the same catholic pursuit. In the latter kingdom there were Kings who would gladly have put a stop to these horrors,..one especially, whose name is deservedly dear in that country, Joam IV. in whom the rightful line was restored: but the clergy and the friars were too powerful. There was a Jesuit living at that same time who possessed and deserved the friendship of that King; a man whose single virtues might almost redeem his Order,..whose single genius might alone ennoble his country, if it had no other boast: (it is of Vieyra that I am speaking,) and for exerting himself in behalf of the New Christians, he was brought under the power of the Inquisition himself. Some fantastic notions connected with Sebastianism afforded a pretext, but this was the cause. I could thrill your blood, Sir, as mine has been thrilled, by authentic details of the Inquisitorial proceedings in Spain and Portugal! I know not whether such details would touch the heart or penetrate the understanding of those BRITISH ROMAN CATHOLICS* *who, only ten years ago, expressed*

* " *Pendant mon séjour à Londres, j'ai entendu dire à quelques Catholiques que l'Inquisition était utile en Espagne pour la conservation de la foi Catholique; et qu'il eût été avantageux pour*

their opinion to Llorente that THE INQUISITION HAD BEEN USEFUL IN SPAIN, AND REGRETTED THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED IN FRANCE ALSO! But assuredly they would make you shudder, and draw from you something more than an admission that such things were *objectionable.* The Popes might at any time have stopt this wickedness. At any time they might have put an end to the enormous evil, the unutterable cruelties, the incalculable sum of human sufferings (sufferings whereof the rack and the stake are the least part) which the Holy Office was producing. If any misunderstanding or dispute arose concerning the asserted privileges of the Papacy, the Popes were ready to exert their power without delay. But when humanity was thus outraged, when religion was

la France d'avoir un pareil établissement. Ce qui trompait ces personnes, c'était de croire qu'il suffisait d'être bon Catholique pour n'avoir rien à craindre du Saint Office."—Hist. Critique de l'Inquisition d'Espagne. Preface, xxiii.

It cannot be necessary to inform Mr. Butler that Llorente was a Roman Catholic himself, who had been secretary to the Inquisition, and that the English Roman Catholic Society, into which he was introduced, cannot have been of the worst kind. But it is well that the British public should know what opinions he found there. The fact is recent; the testimony is undeniable; and these are the persons who are at this time endeavouring to obtain political power!

thus blasphemed and injured, when Christianity was thus perverted and made an object of hatred and horror, they were silent: not a whisper of disapprobation was heard from the Vatican, which was wont to express its displeasure in thunder; not a breath came from the brazen Bulls which had breathed fire against the Waldenses, the Lollards, and the Protestants! The Popes acquiesced in these things; they suffered them to be done, to be approved, to be applauded, as the triumphs of the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolical faith; they allowed the pictures of the victims in their *sanbenitos*, which had been displayed as part of the pageantry while those victims were in the flames, to be suspended as ornaments and trophies in the Churches! Year after year, and generation after generation, the Inquisition immured its victims in solitary dungeons, stretched them on the rack, consumed them at the stake for a holy-day spectacle, (for horrible as it may seem, an auto-da-fè was considered as a festival!) and scattered their ashes upon the winds and waters! And this is one part of the conduct of the Popes toward the Jews. This is the protection which they who could have protected them, afforded! The Popes could have prevented these things, but they permitted them; a large portion of

the guilt, therefore, is upon their heads; and the infamy is upon that Church, that Roman Catholic Church whose principles made persecution a duty;... that Roman Catholic Church which, till this hour, has neither retracted the principle, nor expressed its contrition for the practice.

You have adjured me "as a Christian and a gentleman,* to say on which side the balance of religious persecution lies... the (Roman) Catholic or the Protestant?" There is an Irish act against *making comparisons*, which you cannot but be acquainted with, were it only for its name's-sake, for it is called the Butler-aboo Statute. You should have remembered it, Sir, on this occasion, and enforced it against yourself... On which side does the balance of persecution lie!! Put the Inquisition in the scale, Sir, and nothing can be found to counterpoise it, unless Hell be plucked up by the roots!

SLAVERY.—THE SLAVE TRADE.

CONCERNING slavery, Sir, you have claimed for the Popes a merit which belongs to the Christian religion, "Great exertions," you say,† "were made by them for the redemption

* Page 260. † Page 97.

of captives and the melioration of the condition of the slaves: in 1167 Pope Alexander III. solemnly declared in council, that all Christians ought to be exempt from slavery." That declaration certainly was not followed by any systematic measures for effecting the object which it had in view. But the gradual abolition of slavery in European Christendom is one of those benefits for which we are indebted mainly to Christianity; it is one of those things whereby, as I had stated,* "the Clergy advanced the best interests of this country even during the darkest ages of Papal domination."

Here, Sir, let me introduce a remark relating to the present times, intreating you to lay aside for the moment all controversial feelings, and receive it in the spirit in which it is offered. Nearly twenty years have elapsed since the British Government endeavoured to put an end, so far as its authority extended, to one of the greatest evils that afflict and disgrace humanity. You will at once perceive that it is the slave trade of which I speak. In this good work all the Protestant powers, who were any ways concerned in that trade, have cordially co-operated, certain new States in America alone excepted, who have shown themselves strong enough in

* Book of the Church, i. p. 2.

this instance to prevail against the more enlightened and more virtuous part of the Union. But how have the Roman Catholic powers acted? So far from co-operating with us for so humane an object, Spain and Portugal and Brazil and France have persisted in carrying on the trade, France especially to the utmost of its power, and with circumstances of additional barbarity. This, Sir, is a point on which I believe there can be no discrepance between your wishes and mine. Is it honourable to your Church that such a difference should exist between the Protestant and the Romish powers? Is it consistent with that part of its conduct in former ages for which you have claimed our grateful acknowledgement? Could the restored Jesuits employ their influence in France more worthily than by following the example of their predecessors in opposing this nefarious traffic? Could the Government of France give better proof of its piety than by abolishing it? Could the Pope, as the Head of your Church, consult its reputation, and fulfil his own duty more effectually than by condemning it? I pray you, Sir, receive this as it is meant, and be assured that you could not rejoice more in seeing such a reproach removed from the Roman Catholic Church, than I should do.

LETTER X.

VIEW OF THE PAPAL SYSTEM.

I COME now, Sir, to the Letter in which you bring into the field the Achilles of your argument. But it is an Achilles which, instead of having been dipt in Styx, is vulnerable all over!

Before I take from the quiver those arrows which "are sharp, and shall not miss," let me ask leave to correct an error in my introductory pages. The mistake, indeed, is of little moment; were it of greater, it should be as frankly and readily acknowledged; though you have accused me of wilfully retaining a misstatement† after its falsehood had been pointed out, which accusation, when it comes to be examined, will prove "the little reliance that can be placed"...not on *me*, Sir, but on the accuracy of your own assertions. The error now to be corrected, relates to prunello. I supposed the commodity to have been obsolete, whereas

* Page 211.

I am given to understand that it is still in use, and may be heard of at the shoemaker's, if not at the mercer's; for one of my own family informs me that she sometimes wears prunello shoes. I am reminded of making this acknowledgement here because there will be occasion in the present letter to bring forward some of those tough facts and indigestible deductions which you have arranged under that odd appellation, coupled indeed with another which is not so inappropriate.

In my former work, when the narrative had been brought down to those ages in which the corruptions doctrinal and practical of the Romish Church were at their height, a view of the Papal System was introduced. You have protested* against the very appellation as "particularly offensive;" and yet, Sir, you cannot but know that whatever you may be pleased to call your own semi-reformed and Cis-marine as well as Cis-montane system, *papal* is in strictest propriety the designation which belongs to the Romish Church, in those ages when the papal power was at the full. I said that those corruptions are studiously kept out of view by the writers who still maintain the infallibility of that Church:

* Page 99.

and you have written the Book of the Roman Catholic Church to prove, by the most complete of all possible examples, the truth of that assertion. Your Achilles, though not dipt in Styx, has drank just enough of Lethe to make him forget whatever it was not convenient to remember.

You flatter yourself, Sir, that you shall obtain a verdict of acquittal for the Romish Church from the charges of superstition and idolatry, by stating just so much of its doctrines as you think it expedient to avow. I will prove these charges by bringing forward what you have kept out of sight, and by adducing evidence of its practices.

DEVOTION TO THE VIRGIN MARY.—THE SAINTS.—RESPECT TO THE CROSS, AND TO THE RELICS OF THE SAINTS.

First of the Virgin Mary. You desire* me to "open Mr. Gother's 'Papist Misrepresented,' abridged by Dr. Challoner, the editions of which abridgement are countless," and there, you tell me, I shall find these strong expressions: "Cursed is every goddess-wor-

* Page 101.

shipper that believes the blessed Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature; that worships her, or puts his trust in her, more than in God; that believes she is above her Son, or that she can in any thing command Him. Amen." Certainly, Sir, I will not say Amen to this, whatever you may do; for if I did, I should curse nine tenths of the Roman Catholic world. I will rather say, God have mercy upon them, and enlighten them; and while they remain unenlightened, accept their devotion, however it be misdirected!

You state,* as having been decreed by the Council of Trent, that it is a good and useful supplication to invoke the Saints, that by means of their prayers we may obtain favours from God through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. You tell me that Martin Luther says, "let no one omit to call upon the Blessed Virgin, the Angels and Saints, that they may intercede for them at the hour of death. You ask me† whether several distinguished divines of the English Church do not maintain the same doctrine, and whether what you have stated is not a true and clear exposition of the doctrine of the Romish Church upon this important sub-

* Page 100. † Page 102.

ject? Clear the exposition is,..but as for its truth,..is it the *whole* truth, Sir? Dr. Phillpotts has answered* that question; and I cannot but say with him, "why is it that you will not be more guarded? Why is it, too, that you always mistake on one side? That you never by any chance exceed, but constantly fall short of, the real extent of the doctrine, which you undertake to exhibit?" You know, Sir, what is meant by *diminuto* in the language of the Holy Office!

First, however, let me dispose of Martin Luther and the several distinguished divines. Luther's works are not within my reach: and I happen to know that your references to them, in other instances, are not so explicit as to render the task of verifying them easy, or always practicable. This is easily accounted for, if, as I have no doubt, you have taken them from some of those authorities on which you frequently rely with more confidence than caution. It is very possible that Luther may have written thus in some of his earlier works, before he had proceeded far in his inquiries into the corruptions of the Papal Church, and before

* Letters to Charles Butler, Esq. on the Theological Part of his Book of the Roman-Catholic Church, p. 67.

his own views were completely developed. But will you affirm, Sir, that it was the mature and deliberate opinion of Martin Luther that his followers ought to call upon the Virgin and the Saints to intercede for them at the hour of death? That great and magnanimous man practised what he preached. His life was conformed to his doctrine, and the "comfortable prayer" which he made at his latter end, has been transmitted to us. "Almighty, everlasting, merciful Lord God, Father of our loving Lord Jesus Christ, I certainly know that all which thou hast said the same thou art able to keep and perform. Thou canst not lie: thy word is true! In the beginning thou promisedst me thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ: the same is come, and hath delivered me from the Devil, Death, Hell, and Sin. And for more security, out of thy gracious will there are presented unto me the holy sacraments, baptism, and the Lord's supper. I have made use of them and have received them, and stedfastly in faith I have relied upon thy word. Wherefore I make no doubt at all but that I am secured and delivered from the Devil, Death, Hell, and Sin. Is this my hour and thy divine will and pleasure? So am I willing to depart from hence in joy and peace, according to thy

word, and will go into thy bosom!"* This, Sir, was the dying prayer of Martin Luther, and it is such a prayer as might have been expected from him, a man who had so valiantly fought the good fight, and was entering into his reward.

Who the "several distinguished divines" may be to whom you allude as teaching that we ought to address our prayers to the Virgin and the Saints, I cannot even guess. Nor can I believe, without the fullest proof, that any divines of the English Church could have so taught, in direct contradiction to that article†, which declares the Romish doctrine concerning the invocation of Saints to be "a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrantry of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God."

We must now return to Mr. Gother, and the curse which he imprecates upon those who hold the Virgin Mary to be any thing more than a creature, or who believe that she can in any thing command her Son. Greater authorities, Sir, than Mr. Gother and Dr. Challoner have told the Roman Catholics that they ought to do both. If I prove this, you must allow me to

* Luther's Colloquia Mensalia, p. 502.

† Art. xxii.

call those opinions *superstitious* which you yourself have not hesitated to pronounce *accursed.* And if I prove also that miracles and revelations have been pretended for confirming those opinions, all of which supposititious proofs have been licensed for publication by the official censors of your Church, and some of them sanctioned by a General Council, you must admit that this is a case in which imposture also has been made out. I can hardly persuade myself that you know so little of your own Church history as not to know what abundant evidence might be adduced.

According to what you present as a true and clear statement of the doctrine of the Romish Church, the Virgin Mary is nothing more than a creature. According to your Breviary, Sir, she is exalted above every creature, and stiled the Mistress of all creatures; she is the Queen of Angels, and "the summit of her merits is exalted above all the choirs of Angels, even to the throne of the Godhead." You tell us, on the credit of Mr. Gother, that the Romish Church holds her to be only a creature; but the Venerable* Abbot Engelbert tells us that she holds an undivided empire with her Son;..

* Pezii Thesaurus Anecdotorum, t. i. p. i. 505.

but St. Bernard tells* us that all Scripture was given concerning her, and because of her, and that for her sake this whole world was made;.. but the Romish Church in its offices applies to her the attributes of the Divine Wisdom,† as given by the son of Sirach, and those words of Solomon which are often used as proving the eternal generation of the Son of God. Cursed, according to your exposition, are those who believe that the Blessed Virgin can in any thing command her Son. Why, Sir, the Venerable Abbot Engelbert, who surely is not less venerable than Dr. Challoner, or Mr. Gother, tells us that her Son *cannot deny* any thing that she asks; and applies to this the text in Kings,‡ "Ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay."§...Why, Sir, it has been preached in your Church, and sanctioned for publication after it was preached, that all things‖ are subject to the command of the Virgin, even God himself! that "considering the Blessed Virgin

* Super Salve Regina. 1740.

† Dr. Phillpotts' Letters, p. 43—47.

‡ i. ii. 20. Pezii Thes. ut supra.

§ The text is stronger in the Latin. *Pete, Mater mea; neque enim fas est ut avertam faciem tuam.*

‖ *Imperio Virginis omnia famulantur, et Deus.*—Bernardinus de Busto. Ussher, 481.

is the Mother of God, and God is her Son, and every son is naturally inferior to his mother, and subject to her, and the mother hath pre-eminence and is superior to her son, it therefore followeth that the Blessed Virgin is superior to God, and God himself is subject unto her in respect of the manhood which he assumed from her."* Why, Sir, it is said in a book which is of as much authority as Mr. Gother's "Papist Misrepresented," and which has been much more widely read, that the Virgin herself has said,† speaking in her own person, "the will of the Blessed Trinity and mine is one, and to whatsoever pleaseth me, the whole Trinity with unspeakable favour consenteth." It has been preached from your pulpits and published from your presses, that the Virgin appeared to Thomas à Becket, and said unto him,‡ "Rejoice,

* *Cum beata Virgo sit Mater Dei, et Deus filius ejus; et omnis filius sit naturaliter inferior matre et subditus ejus, et mater prælata et superior filio; sequitur quod ipsa benedicta Virgo sit superior Deo, et ipse Deus sit subditus ejus ratione humanitatis ab ea assumptæ.*—Ussher, ut supra.

† Promptuar. Disc. de Miraculis B. Mariæ, exemp. xiv. p. 8. Edit. Moguntiæ, 1612. Quoted in Archb. Ussher's Answer to a Challenge, p. 487. ed. 1631.

‡ *Gaude quia* FILIUS MEUS MIHI SEMPER EST OBEDIENS, *et meam voluntatem et cunctas preces meas semper exaudit.*—Bernardinus de Busto. Mariale, Part x. serm. ii. sect. ult. Quoted by Archb. Ussher, ut supra.

because my Son is always obedient unto me, and my will, and all my prayers he always heareth.'' Do you believe this, Sir? or will you acknowledge that doctrines, which you with Mr. Gother and Dr. Chalioner anathematize, are taught by your divines; and that fables in confirmation of them have been preached and published as revelations, with the knowledge and with the sanction of a Church which suffers nothing to be printed that it disapproves? If you abide by Mr. Gother, here, you must acknowledge, is a case of impiety and imposture proved, not upon the Seraphic preacher, who may in good faith have believed the legend which he repeated, but upon the inventor of the fable, whoever he may have been, and upon that Church which, having infallibility vested in its Head, or in its members, suffered it thus to go forth as a truth to be believed! If you abide by Mr. Gother, your curse alights upon no less a person than Bonaventura, a Cardinal and a Saint, and upon all those who use prayers which he has prescribed, to be said with the Rosary; for in those prayers the Virgin* is

* *O Imperatrix et Domina nostra benignissima, jure Matris impera tuo dilectissimo filio Domino nostro Jesu Christo, ut mentes nostras ab amore terrestrium ad cœlestia desideria erigere dignetur.* —Bonaventuræ Opera. t. vi. edit. Rom. 1588. Quoted by Ussher, *ut supra*, 489.

intreated *by the authority of a Mother to* COMMAND *her most beloved Son* that he would vouchsafe to lift up our minds from the love of earthly things unto heavenly desires: and again in his "Lady's Psalter," he says, "Incline the countenance of God upon us, COMPEL *him* to have mercy upon sinners."* Are the devotees accursed, Sir, who repeat Cardinal St. Bonaventura's crown, believing that it contains the doctrine of their Church? Or are they entitled to the two hundred and seventy-three thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight days of indulgence, which, according to the Seraphic F. Bernardinus de Busto,† is the sum total of indulgences granted for reciting every one of these crowns?

Where, Sir, is the boasted unity of your Romish Church, and where its infallibility? We have here an opinion of such moment, that, according to your own representation, error in

* *Inclina vultum Dei super nos, coge illum peccatoribus misereri*—(Ib. in Psalt. B. Mariæ Virg.), the harshness whereof, says Ussher, our Romanists have a little qualified in some of their editions, reading thus: *Inclina vultum filii tui super nos! coge illum precibus nobis peccatoribus misereri.*—(Ed. 1596.) ... Thus it is that the Romanists tamper with authorities, and alter to their own convenience the text of their own Doctors and Saints!

† Ussher, ut supra, 489.

it is damnable. God forbid that I should think it so! But how perilous it is to those who hold it, how injurious to religion, and consequently to society, shall presently be shown. Upon this opinion you and your selected authorities tell us one thing, and your Doctors and Saints and Breviaries tell us another. For Bonaventura is not the only Saint whom I can bring forward. St. Peter Damian (he too a Cardinal as well as a Saint) speaks of the blessed Virgin, when she intercedes for sinners, as not intreating, but *commanding;* as a *Mistress,* and not as a handmaid. "Holy Church," says a book of English Roman Catholic devotions, "frequently minds her of her *Motherhood,* and supplicates that she will be pleased to show *that great authority* wherewith this Title of Titles *empowers* her.

Monstra te esse Matrem!
Sumat per te preces,*
Qui pro nobis natus
Tulit esse tuus."

* Dr. Phillpotts has well observed, "it is worth remarking that, in this instance, an important change has been wrought in transferring the original hymn into your English books of devotion, in order to accommodate it to the feelings of those who live among Protestants. The turn given to it in the "Garden of the Soul," (p. 254.) is as follows:

Exert the mother's care
And *us thy children own!*

What says the Patriarch of Constantinople, St. Germanus? He says that the intercession of the Virgin is irrefragable, because of the invincible power which she possesses with her Son. What says St. Antonine of Florence? that Christ *obeys* her as his mother in Heaven, even as he did upon earth. Are men canonized, Sir, who teach what is damnable?† Whom or which are we to receive as delivering the real opinion of the Romish Church,..Mr. Gother, or St. Antonine? St. Peter Damian, or Dr. Challoner?..Mr. Charles Butler, or Cardinal St. Bonaventura?..The Breviary, or the Book of the Roman Catholic Church?.... Be not offended, Sir! You have called upon me,‡ who had given you no cause for such a call, to compare myself "with Anselm in holiness, with

To him convey our prayer
Who chose to be thy Son.
Letters to Charles Butler, Esq. p. 48.

Whereas the meaning of the original, as truly given in the older books, is,

Shew thyself to be a mother,
Let him through thee receive our prayers.... (the *imperative* mood)
Who for our sakes submitted
To be born thy Son.

* Andrade, Patrocinio de N. Señora, tit. i. § ii. p. 493.

† Ib.

‡ Page 74.

Bede in hagiography, with the author of the Alexandreis in poetry, with Thomas Aquinas in theology, with Matthew Paris and Matthew of Westminster in history, and with Roger Bacon in philosophy!" There is cause for the comparison which I request you to make. For your opinion is at variance with Bonaventura's, for your book is contradicted by your Breviary. It is you, not I, who come under the provisions of the Butler-aboo statute.

Enough has been said to show that the Blessed Virgin is regarded as something more than a creature by Romish writers of the highest authority, and that she is called upon in the prayers of the Romish Church to exercise the authority of a Mother over her Son. But this part of my subject would be incomplete were I to leave it here.

Baronius touches very lightly upon the heresy of the Collyridians,* who fancied that the Blessed Virgin was of divine nature, impeccable, and immortal, and who worshipped her as a Goddess, offering in sacrifice upon her yearly festival, certain cakes, (κολλυρίδας,) from which they derived their name, and of which they all partook. This superstition originated among some Thracian women, and is condemned by

* T. iv. 359. Bernino, i. 305.

Epiphanius in terms as strong as if he had foreseen the Hyperdulia which would one day be practised in the Romish Church. "Let Mary be held in honour," * he says, "but let the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be worshipped; let no one worship Mary. Although Mary be most excellent, and holy, and to be honoured, yet is she not to be worshipped." And he called upon his contemporaries to put down with a manly mind the madness of these women, hoping, in his own words, to cut the roots of this idolatrous heresy.

Let us see whether opinions as extravagant as those of the Collyridians have not been advanced upon the same subject by names of high authority in the Romish Church; and whether ceremonies as idolatrous as that of consecrating cakes to her honour are not encouraged in that Church, and widely practised by its members at this day. What, Sir, will you say of St. Peter Damian, and of St. Bernard, who both † maintain that to the Virgin all power in Heaven and Earth is given? What

* Ussher's Answer to a Challenge, 477.

† *Data est tibi omnis potestas in cœlo et in terrâ.*—Petr. Damian. Serm. i. de Nativ. B. Mar. t. v. Surii, Sept. 8. Quoted by Ussher, ut supra, p. 480.

Data est ei potestas in cœlo et in terra, quæ posse potestas est. —S. Bernardini Opera, 1735. Super Salve Regina.

to St. Anselm,* who calls her the Empress of Heaven and Earth, and all that is therein? What to St. Bernardine de Sienna,† who says that all the gifts, graces, and virtues of the Holy Ghost, are by her hands administered to whom she pleaseth, when she pleaseth, how she pleaseth, and as much as she pleaseth; and this because she is the Mother of the Son from whom the Spirit proceedeth? What to the Patriarch St. Germanus, (still, Sir, they are your Saints whom I bring forward to prove your doctrine!) when he affirms that no one is forgiven, unless through her intercession; no one receives God's grace,‡ unless through her mediation; no one is saved, unless through her help? What of Cassian, who asserts that the salvation of all mankind consists in the multitude of her favours?§ What of St. Fulgentius,‖ when he tells us that neither Earth nor

* Andrade, ut supra, 538.

† *Et quia talis est Mater Filii Dei qui producit Spiritum Sanctum, ideò omnia dona, virtutes et gratiæ ipsius Spiritus Sancti quibus vult, quando vult, quomodo vult, et quantum vult per manus ipsius administrantur.*—Serm. lxi. Artic. i. cap. viii. Ussher, ut supra, 479.

‡ Jesus, Mary, Joseph, p. 52.

§ Ib. 54.

‖ *Cœlum et terra dudum fuissent si non Maria precibus sustentásset.*—l. iv. Myst. Theol. Andrade, Patrocinio de N. Señora, p. 500.

Heaven would be at this time existing, unless Mary supported them with her prayers? What of Ricardus de S. Laurentio, who says it is necessary for men to have three mediators in Heaven, one with each person of the Trinity; the Son therefore mediates with the Father, the Holy Spirit with the Son, and the Virgin with the Spirit; upon which the Jesuit F. Alonso de Andrade observes,* that, piously as this is said, and honourable as it is for the Queen of Angels thus to be numbered with the Trinity, standing in the place and performing the functions of a fourth person, her advocacy extends farther, inasmuch as she is our mediator with all Three. A Jesuit, who published under the inspection and with the approbation of his Order in its happiest days, cannot have advanced any thing contrary to the received opinions of the Romish Church. A book of popular instruction, (for such that is which is open before me,) written where the author was under no apprehension of protestant readers, may better be trusted for representing the real doctrines and practices of that Church, than one composed in England by an Englishman who is conversant with Protestants, and who has every inducement for setting forth a varnished tale.

* Itinerario, p. 492.

The Collyridians were heretics. But can heresy have come from the Venerables and Saints of the Romish Church? Can heresy be inculcated in your books of popular devotion? Can it be promulgated and enforced by a Jesuit who was a trusted and sworn conservator of the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Faith in his capacity of *Calificador* to the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, and who in that capacity (for he lived in the high days of the Holy Office, in its golden age) had *qualified* scores and hecatombs of victims for the stake?

The Apostle tells us there is but one mediator between God and Man. In the office which your priests are bound to recite every day of their lives, and the omission of which is accounted a mortal sin, the Virgin Mary is addressed as Our Life, Our Hope, Our Mediatrix! There is nothing more common in the Romish writers than to represent that Saviour, who died for us upon the Cross, as a vindictive God, and the Virgin as the advocate who intercedes and obtains pardon and acceptance for us, not through his merits and mediation, but through her own.

You pretend, Sir, that the Romish Church ought not to be charged with any doctrines which are not contained in a certain Creed, as you have presented it, and from which a most

important clause has been dropt by the way, or in certain expositors selected by yourself. By these and these only, you insist that the question should be tried, whether the Church of Rome is or is not an idolatrous and a superstitious Church? Is not this as if a tradesman were indicted for selling adulterated goods and issuing false bills, and his counsel, protesting against the examination of either, were to require that the defendant's own books should be received as unexceptionable evidence, and that no other witnesses should be admitted than those who were called to give him a good character?... In the present case the wares and the bills are brought into court and proved there, and the practices brought home to the accused by testimony which cannot be shaken.

Christ, says Vieyra,* is the Judge, and Mary

* False as this doctrine is, and mischievously as it is often times applied, some of my readers will be pleased to see how it is illustrated by the rich fancy of this inimitable writer, who was perfect master of one of the most flexible, varied, copious, and powerful of modern tongues. "*He a luz mais benigna que o Sol; porque o Sol allumia, mas abraza: a luz allumia e nam offende. Quereis ver a differença da luz ao Sol? Olhay para o mesmo Sol, e para a mesma luz, de quem elle nasce, a Aurora. A Aurora he o riso do Ceo, a alegria dos campos, a respiraçam das flores, a harmonia das aves, a vida e alento do mundo. Começa a sahir e a crecer o Sol; eys o gesto agradavel do mundo, e a com-*

the Advocate.* The author of the *Santuario*

posiçam da mesma natureza, toda mudada. O Ceo acendese; os campos seccamse; as flores murchamse; as aves emudecem; os animaes buscam as covas; os homens as sombras. E se Deos nam cortara a carreyra ao Sol com a interposiçam da noyte, fervèra e abrazarase a terra; arderam as plantas; seccaram-se os rios; sumiram-se as fontes; e foram verdadeyros e nam fabulosos, os incendios de Faetonte. A razam natural desta differença he, porque o Sol (como dizem os Filosofos) ou verdadeyramente he fogo, ou de natureza muy semelhante ao fogo, elemento terrivel, indomito, abrazador, executivo, e consumidor de tudo. Pelo contrario a luz em sua pureza, he huma calidade branda, suave, amiga, emfim creada para companheyro e instrumento da vista, sem offensa dos olhos, que sam em toda a orginazaçam do corpo humano a parte mais humana, mais delicada e mais mimosa. ... Estas sam as propriedades rigorosas e benignas do Sol, e da luz natural. E as mesmas, se bem o considerarmos, acharemos no Sol, e na Luz Divina. Christo he Sol, mas Sol de Justiça, como lhe chamou o Profeta, Sol justitiæ. *E que muyto que no Sol haja rayos, e na justiça rigores? Todos os rigores, que tem obrado no mundo o Sol natural, tantas seccas, tantas esterilidades, tantas sedes, tantas fomes, tantas doenças, tantas pestes, tantas mortandades, tudo foram execuçoens do Sol de Justiça, o qual as fez ainda mayores. O Sol material nunca queymou cidades; e o Sol de Justiça queymou e abrazou em hum dia as cinco cidades de Pentapolis inteyras, sam deyxar homem a vida, nem dos mesmos edificios e pedras, mais que as cinzas. Taes sam os rigores daquelle Sol Divino. Mas a benignidade da Luz que hoje nace, e de que elle naceo, como a poderey eu explicar? Muytas e grandes cousas pudera dizer desta soberana benignidade; mas direy só huma, que val por todas. He tam benigna aquella Divina Luz, que sendo tam rigorosos, e tam terriveis os rayos do Divino Sol, ella só basta para os abrandar, e fazer tambem benignos.*—Sermoens, t. i. 250-254.

* Sermoens, t. i. 281.

Mariano tells us that she is the only channel of grace, a truth, he says,* founded upon the common opinion of the Fathers of the Church. She is the Ruth, says Bonaventura,† who gathers up the fallen ears which would otherwise be lost, and deposits them in the granaries of Heaven. Even as Eve had persuaded Adam to our destruction, so it was necessary that Mary, as her antitype, should prevail over the Second Adam for our redemption: it was necessary also that we should have a mediator who is wholly human, to turn aside the anger of a Judge whom the divine part of his nature renders terrible, in order that all may negociate with him through her,‡ not in fear and trembling, but in confidence that he will refuse nothing which she asks. Such is the efficacy of her intercession, that myriads upon myriads are now crowned in Heaven, who, but for her,§ would have been burning in hell. She has even saved the Angels also, many of whose seats would have been vacated like Lucifer's,‖ had it not been for her protection. And she has saved the world itself, by withholding the arm

* T. i. p. v

† Andrade, ut supra, 496.

‡ Ib. 492.

§ Ib. 495.

‖ St. Anselm, ib. 493.

of her offended Son, when raised for vengeance.* She is the only hope and refuge of those who without her must utterly despair.† Redeem them indeed by suffering for their sakes, as our Saviour has done, she cannot; but so great is her compassion, that she pledges herself for their repentance and amendment, and becomes surety for them,‡ and so saves them from condemnation. She is the ladder by which sinners ascend to Heaven. And even when the Devils have the soul of a sinner actually in their grasp, at the name of Mary they loose their prey in fear, and the victim escapes like a bird rescued from a hawk's talons.§ Other Saints may seem to limit themselves in their mercies; their patronage is extended only to particular places; Santiago, for example, is the tutelary Saint of Spain, St. Denis of France, and St. Januarius for Naples; and they confine themselves to the cure of particular diseases, (like certain members of the Corporation of Surgeons;) St. Lucia, to wit, practises as an oculist, St. Roque for the plague, and St. Blas for sore throats. But,

* St. Anselm, Andrade, 493.

† St. Epiphanius, ib. 494.

‡ St. Germanus, ib. 495.

§ Revel. S. Brigittæ, l. i. c. 9. p. 11. ed. 1628.

the Virgin extends her patronage to all places;* she has a cure for all complaints, a salve for every sore. The devotee who relies upon other Saints may find them fail him in his need, but they who place their trust upon the Virgin are secure. For when St. Francisco de Borja, as Commissary for the Order in Spain, visited a noviciate, he asked his novices, one by one, under the patronage of what Saints they had placed themselves upon their vocation: most of them made answer that they had chosen the Blessed Virgin; but there were a few whose choice had fallen upon some other celestial patron. Borja took the master aside, and bade him have an eye upon those youths, saying that he was not satisfied concerning them: and we are told that the event verified his prophetic misgivings, for all these forsook the religious life upon which they had entered, whereas all who had placed themselves under the tutelage of the Virgin, continued in it.† And as she is more certain than other Saints, so is she more bountiful than our Saviour himself; for that this is so, and is felt to be so, is made apparent by their images; more and greater miracles are worked by hers than by his,‡ and therefore they are greatly

* Andrade, ut supra, 498. † Andrade, 553.

‡ Santuario Mariano, t. i. p. iv.

more numerous, and much more frequented... Great was Diana of the Ephesians; but greater is that Goddess who, instead of wearing the crescent on her head, is represented with it under her feet; and greater are the gains which she has brought to the silversmiths, and to the priests of her temples!

This, Sir, is the popular doctrine of the Romish Church concerning the Blessed Virgin. It is drawn from Roman Catholic books, every one of which has been examined and re-examined with all the vigilant jealousy of that Church to see that nothing contrary to its doctrine, or to its pleasure, should be put into the hands of the people. Popes and Councils have solemnly approved of some,..others have been sanctioned by Doctors of Theology, Provincials and Generals of the Religious Orders, Bishops and Inquisitors. For every passage in the statement that is set before you, the vouchers are produced. Examine them I intreat you,.. in justice examine them; and if the authorities which are quoted do not bear me out to the very letter of the statement, you may then give your assent fairly to the next vote in which I shall be pronounced a calumniator. If they do,..ask yourself, Sir, whether the charge of superstition and creature-worship is not esta-

blished! For this, I repeat, is the popular doctrine* of the Papal Church, a doctrine not merely connived at by the heads of that Church, but openly encouraged by them.

When you describe the Romish devotion to the Virgin, you inquire† if I can find out any thing reprehensible in it? Even, Sir, if the statement which you present had set the actual extent and nature of that devotion before us, instead of being softened down that it might pass with a Protestant public, I should answer *yes*,..much that is reprehensible. I should

* Madame de Sevigné tells an amusing story, which shows how completely the Virgin had become the great object of faith among the vulgar... *Pour La Mousse, il fait des catéchismes les fêtes et les dimanches: il veut aller en paradis: je lui dis que c'est par curiosité, et afin d'être assuré une bonne fois si le soleil est un amas de poussière qui se meut avec violence, ou si c'est un globe de feu. L'autre jour il interrogeoit des petits enfans; et après plusieurs questions, ils confondirent le tout ensemble, de sorte que, venant à leur demander qui étoit* LA VIERGE, ils répondirent tous l'un après l'autre que c'étoit le Créateur du ciel et de la terre: *il ne fut point ébranlé par les petits enfans; mais voyant que* des hommes, des femmes, et même des vieillards disoient la même chose, *il en fut persuadé, et se rendit à l'opinion commune. Enfin il ne savoit plus où il en étoit, et, si je ne fusse arrivée là-dessus, il ne s'en fût jamais tiré: cette nouvelle opinion eût bien fait un autre désordre que le mouvement des petites parties.*—Mad. de Sevigné, Lett. 184. t. ii. 209. edit. 1820.

† Page 103.

reply that it is in direct contradiction to the words of the Apostle, who tells us "there is but one Mediator between God and Man;" and to the words of that Mediator himself, "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve!" The distinction between *Latria* and *Dulia* will not exempt you from the charge of creature-worship, even where it is understood and borne in mind; but to the multitude it is heathen Greek. They worship the Virgin as honestly in her own person as the Ephesians did their Diana, or the Paphians their Venus; and they worship her under one appellation* in preference to another,

* This practice was condemned by a provincial Synod held at Rouen under the Archbishop Raoul Roussel, A.D. 1445. The seventh statute passed in that assembly is remarkable, says the Continuator of Fleury, "*en ce qu'il condamne la superstition de ceux qui donnent des noms particuliers à des Images de la Sainte Vierge, comme de Notre Dame de Recouvrance, Notre Dame de Pitié, de Consolation, de Grace, &c. dans la vûe de quelque gain, parce que cela donne lieu de croire qu'il y a plus de vertu dans une Image que dans une autre.*"—Lenfant, C. de Basle, ii. 178.

The Romish Church, however, in opposition to the Provincial Synod, has encouraged this superstition by granting indulgences to those who shall say their prayers before particular Images, or prints of those Images.

How the fashion in such things changes Vieyra shows when he is preaching upon the pre-eminence of N. Senhora de Penha de França, confining himself for examples to the city of Lisbon:

and ascribe peculiar power to particular images. Nothing can be more certain than that this is the practice in Roman Catholic countries, nothing more notorious to those who have lived in them, or who are conversant with Roman Catholic books.

May I not in my turn inquire whether you do not perceive something reprehensible in the doctrines which I have set before you as inculcated by Monks and Friars and Jesuits, and Cardinals and Saints? But what, Sir, will you say when I shall show, as I proceed to do, that in support of this doctrine, as thus stated, revelations are quoted and miracles adduced? It is the Virgin herself who is said to have told the Swedish St. Bridget that the

"*Esta he huma excellencia, com que a Virgem Maria quiz singularizar os privilegios desta sua Casa, sobre todas as que tem milagrosas no mundo, e sobre todas as que tem nesta Cidade. Deyxemos as do mundo, porque fora discurso muy dilatado: Vamos às de Lisboa. Foy milagrosa em Lisboa a Casa de Nossa Senhora da Natividade; mas passaram os milagres da Natividade. Foy milagrosa a Casa de Nossa Senhora do Amparo; mas passaram os milagres do Amparo. Foy milagrosa a Casa de Nossa Senhora do Desterro; mas passaram os milagres do Desterro. Foy milagrosa a Casa de Senhora da Luz; mas passarum os milagres da Luz. Só a Casa de Nossa Senhora de Penha de França foy milagrosa, e he milagrosa, e ha de ser milagrosa.*"—Sermoens, t. i. 710.

Devils release their victim if they hear her name! It is Christ himself who is represented as telling the same personage that were it not for his Mother's mediation there would be no hope for mercy!* Your creed binds you to believe in St. Bridget's Revelations; for in it you profess "undoubtedly to receive every thing delivered and declared by General Councils;" and these revelations have been approved by the Councils of Constance and of Basil, and moreover by three Popes. It is Christ himself who, in the book thus ratified and set forth by the highest authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, is introduced as saying that he cannot deny any thing which his Mother asks, and as promising the kingdom of Heaven to all who, with the intention of amending their lives, shall put their trust in *her*.† It is the Father who in the same book is represented as saying to the Virgin, "thy will shall be done; because thou when on earth hast denied me nothing, I will deny thee nothing in Heaven!"‡ And St Gertrude in her revelations§ describes our Saviour

* *Verè ecclesia mea nimis longè recessit a me, in tantum quod nisi preces Matris meæ intervenirent, non esset spes misericordiæ.* —Revel. l. vi. c. xxvi. p. 364.

† Ib. l. i. c. l. p. 62.

‡ Ib. l. i. c. xxiv. p. 29.

§ ..." *levantandose el Hijo de Dios con gran acatimiento, y*

as kneeling before his Mother in Heaven, and setting an example of filial obedience!*

The women into whose feverish heads these fancies entered may have been as crazy as Joanna Southcott, when they spake of themselves, and were not (which others of the same class plainly were) the tools or accomplices of a knavish confessor: but what shall be said of those persons, high in authority, who set their official stamp upon such things, that they might pass for sterling truths? Long ago, Sir, the remark was made, that when any new doctrine

passando delante de su Madre hincò sus rodillas, y baxando la cabeça con amor y reverencia, digna del que fue exemplo de la obediencia y respeto con que han de tratar los hijos a los padres, la saludò."—Vida y Revelaciones de S. Gertrudis la Magna, l. iii. c. xix. p. 128. Madrid. 1689.

* "The Heavens are terrified, the Angels tremble, all creatures stand astonished, whole Nature is amazed at the birth of this Great-Little-Man-God into the world, whilst you, O Blessed Virgin Mother! remain undaunted, and not only lodge him in your bosom, receive him into your embraces, refresh him with your breast-milk, but moreover, with an unparalleled confidence you make him pay for his entertainment, asking no less a reward for his nine months lodging than the grant of a general and universal peace to the world, Glory for the heavenly inhabitants, Grace for earthly criminals, Life for the dead, a strict league between the Church militant and triumphant, and a perpetual alliance of his divine person with our human nature."—*Jesus, Maria, Joseph.*

was to be established in your Church, any fresh device of man's invention to be added to the corruptions of Christianity, signs and wonders in abundance were produced to give it credence. One wickedness drew on another; fictions which had been invented in wantonness of mind, opinions which had been thrown out in the sport of a subtle intellect, or advanced in the heat of argument, or of declamation, were maintained with deliberate falsehood; and the dreams of folly, or the ravings of delirium, were attested as solemn and sacred truths, with all the hardihood of confirmed impiety. The history of every corruption in the Papal Church, in other words, of every doctrine wherein it differs from the Reformed Churches, may supply proofs of this.

We shall find enough in the subject which is immediately before us. Here, Sir, are some of the tales by which that figment was supported which takes from the Redeemer his attribute of mercy, and invests the Virgin with it in his stead. A holy Cistercian, by name Wichelm, was rapt in spirit before the tribunal of Christ, when our Lord was so full of wrath against this sinful world, that he commanded one of his Angels to sound a trumpet. The trumpet was sounded, and the world shook like a leaf upon

a tree that is shaken by the wind. Our Lord bade the Angel sound a second time, which if he had done, the globe must have fallen to pieces: the whole host of Heaven awaited this catastrophe in fear; but the Virgin rose from her seat and prostrated herself before her Son, and by her intercession, though he hesitated at granting it, obtained a respite for mankind.* A Franciscan novice, who in like manner was rapt in a dream, saw the world cited for judgement before our offended Lord: the books were cast up before him, and the balance of its offences was so great, that, taking the globe in his hand, he cast it into the abyss for punishment. At this the Novice cried out, Holy Mary, help! and the Virgin, rising in time from her seat, caught the earth, knelt before her Son, presented it to him, interceded for it, and obtained a respite upon her promise that it should be amended and reformed. The Novice awoke in such fear that he expired as soon as he had told his tale; and the truth of what he said was confirmed by an earthquake which, at the moment when he uttered the cry, shook the city, and threw down many houses, and destroyed many people.†... A shepherd boy

* Cæsarius, l. ii. c. xviii. Quoted in Andrade, p. 500.
† St. Anton. 3 p. Hist. Lit. xii. § 63. ib.

saw our Lord, upon his Mother's intreaty, sheathe the sword of justice which he had drawn; and he also died to attest the truth of his declaration.*... An image of the Virgin was one day seen to sweat, till it ran down her face in streams; the portent was accounted for by the declaration of a Devil extorted from him in the process of exorcism, that at that moment she had been engaged in withholding the upraised arm of her incensed Son, and that the agitation which she underwent in Heaven had made her image thus perspire on earth.†... A Carthusian saw our Lord take from a quiver some fiery darts, which he was preparing to hurl against this world, when the Virgin interposed, and he relented at her prayer, saying he could refuse nothing that she asked. It was not a mere dream; for, after the monk awoke from his trance, the Virgin appeared to him ‡ and bade him relate what he had seen, and admonish the world to repent. Should you tell me, Sir, that these are only pious frauds, I must exclaim with St. Peter Damian, but using the words in a different sense from that in which he intended them,

* S. Anton. 3 p. Hist. Lit. xxii. c. iii. § 31. and 4 p. Lit. xv. c. ii. ib. 501.

† Cæsarius, ib. 501.

‡ P. Euseb. Trop. Mar. l. iv. c. lii. ib. 502.

impia pietas! They who either feign miracles, or falsify history upon that system, should put the question to themselves which our sagacious South puts for them when he says,* "will not the world be induced to look upon my religion as a lie, if I allow myself to lie for my religion?"

Sometimes the great goddess is represented in a vindictive character, clothed with terrors,

> As when Minerva in her Sire's defence,
> Shook in Phlegræan fields her dreadful spear.

Twelve times during the wars of the Portugueze in Angola has she been seen in battle, in the foremost ranks, sword in hand, slaughtering the infidels by hundreds and by thousands;† in one great action when two hundred Portugueze with ten thousand negro Christians were attacked by an enemy of no less than six hundred thousand unbelievers, she came, with Santiago by her side, and routed them with incredible destruction.‡ With Santiago by her side she defended Cuzco against the Peruvian insurgents; with Santiago, won for the Spaniards the strong hold of the Peñon de Acoma in Mexico.§ Armed cap-a-pee in white armour,

* Vol. i. 334. † Andrade, ut supra, 564.

‡ Andrade, 572. from the Annual Letter of the Jesuits, ib.

§ Ib. 581, 2.

and on a white horse, with an imperial crown on her head, and a spear in her hand, she went forth at the head of an army from the city of Siclitana against the Moors; in that form her Image was afterwards worshipped there in remembrance of her victory, and the spot was visited as sacred, where, when she alighted from her horse, the mark of her foot was miraculously impressed.* None of the Grecian gods took so active a part at the siege of Troy, as she did in the recovery of Spain from the Moors. When the musselmen attempted to recover Zaragoza by surprize during the night, her image stood in the gateway, sword in hand, and maintained the entrance against them till the alarm spread, and the Christians hastening to the spot, defeated the already dismayed unbelievers. That very image was venerated in Zaragoza centuries afterwards by the name of N. Señora del Portillo, from the portal which had been the scene of her achievements.† By her aid it was that King St. Ferdinand put the Moors to flight so often, and conquered the city of Seville: she instructed him how to destroy the engines of the enemy; and the pious king, ascribing the conquest to her as was her

* Andrade, 574. P. Paulo Castellati quoted. † Ib. 566.

due, placed her image upon a car that she might enter the city in triumph, and accompanied it in procession that joyful day to the great mosque, which was then consecrated to her name,* and where at this time that same image is venerated and adored. When Rhodes was defended against the great Turk Mahommed, the Virgin stood upon the walls, with St John the Baptist for her companion in arms, both armed with breastplates, having morions on their heads, and wielding each a spear; and such havoc did they make among the Turks, smiting them down as fast as they mounted in the escalade, that the few who survived that disastrous assault raised the siege in dismay.† Her image vanished from its Church at Einsiedeln‡ and

* Acta Vita S. Ferdinandi Regis. Antverpiæ. 1684. p. 189, 191.

† Andrade, 569. Funes Chron. del Orden de S. Juan quoted.

‡ [This I suppose to be the sumptuous Temple of *N. Señora del Yermo*, which Andrade speaks of. He adds, upon the authority of Surius, that after the body of Zuinglius was burnt, the heretics carefully collected his ashes, placed them upon an altar and worshipped them. (p. 517.) The truth is, that his heart, which remained unconsumed, was taken away by Thomas Plater (one of his friends), and Myconius, who was also his friend, threw it into the Rhine, lest it should become an object of superstitious veneration to a people hardly weaned from the errors in which they had been trained up.—*Ebel.* t. ii. 349.

appeared at the head of the believers in that battle wherein Zuinglius and all his followers fell, not a heretic escaping unhurt to bear the news of their utter overthrow.* And on a former occasion, when the Church was in no less danger, and St. Basil prayed to her for help, he saw the image to which his prayers were addressed change colour, and speak to that of the martyr St. Mercurius, which stood near; Mercurius immediately disappeared; presently he returned, the spear which he carried in his hand was red and reeking with blood, and it was afterwards ascertained, that at that very hour the Apostate Julian had received his mortal wound from an unseen hand.†

It is not of Pallas or Bellona, Sir, that these things are related, but of Mary the mother of Jesus! They are told not as the fictions of poets, but in history, in Missionary reports, and in books of popular devotion, by priests, monks, friars, jesuits, and inquisitors. They are gravely related as truths to be believed for edification. Altars have been erected, and chapels endowed for the images concerning which such legends have been forged; and some of these images are worshipped at this day, for the miracles which

* Andrade, 517. † Ib. 516.

they are thus said to have performed. Yet, Sir, you have called it calumny to accuse a Church of superstition, in which such things are believed; and a clergy of imposture, by whom they were invented, and by whom the people are taught to believe them!

These are instances of vengeance upon the enemies of the faith in general; but the heathen goddesses have not shown themselves more terribly vindictive in cases of personal offence, than the all-seeing and all-powerful Virgin of the Romish mythology. A powerful baron, who had possessed himself of the town of Mans, refused at the bishop's prayer to restore the domains of the church, and despised his censures, as he had done his intreaties. The Virgin punished the offender first with a sharp illness, which had not the effect of awakening him to a sense of his guilt. She then came in person to his bed-side, and with a hammer knocked him on the head. The apparition and the blow brought him to his senses, instead of frightening him out of them: he repented, made restitution, and was absolved; and bore a scar on his forehead as long as he lived.* A certain Prince William of Burgundy was more severely

* Andrade, 544. Surius *in Vita S. Domueli* quoted.

punished. He had deprived one of her convents of the estates with which his ancestors had endowed it; her service was neglected in consequence, the revenues which should have supported it being thus cut off, and a monk heard her say she would leave the place. He ventured to ask, whither she would go, and she replied, "to my Son, that I may complain of this William who will not let me rest!" Shortly afterwards, William and his wife and children were intercepted by their enemies, thrown down a precipice, and dashed to pieces.* The Bavarian Prince Arnold for a like offence was carried off by the Devil bodily, in broad day, and dropped into a lake, before his own castle, in sight of a great multitude of people; nor could his body ever be found.† And a Genevan preacher, who was holding forth against her worship, was taken out of the pulpit by the Devil, before the whole congregation, and carried away through the air, body and soul, to hell, there to be everlastingly tormented.‡ What was the wrath of Diana, or of Juno, compared to this? To complete this part of the character

* Andradę, 544. Cæsarius, l. vii. c. vii.

† Ib. Trithemius quoted.

‡ Ib. 523. This happened in the year 1594, in the sight of innumerable persons, whereof *some* were converted!

with which the Romanists have invested this object of their adoration, it is only necessary to add that she has always manifested singular favour toward the holy tribunal of the Inquisition, as being the strong hold of the faith, the firmest column of the Roman-Catholic Church, and its surest defence against heretical pravity.* The pleasure which she receives from the burnt offerings of that precious tribunal was proved by a miracle. Gabriel Patreolus relates it, upon the authority of Bernard Lutzemburg, though they have omitted to state in what city occurred; and the Jesuit inquisitor Andrade relates it as a proof of the favour with which the Virgin regards the proceedings of the Holy Office. A certain heretic, Guido Delacha, by name, dealt with the Devil, but concealed both his heretical notions and his diabolical dealings so well, that he lived and died with the reputation of a saint, and in that reputation his body was deposited with all honours. The Inquisition however got scent of his opinions, proceeded against him after his death, disinterred his remains, which else were in a fair way of being enshrined and worshipped, and brought them forth in an *auto-da-fè* to be burnt,

* Andrade, 518.

according to its practice on such occasions. In this instance the Devil proved staunch to his old friend; for the coffer, wherein the bones were contained, was taken out of the flames by some unseen power, and suspended in the air above them at safe distance, in sight of all the people. The multitude exclaimed, "a miracle!" their old prepossession concerning his sanctity was confirmed, as well it might, and they accused the Inquisitors, and the Bishop at their head, of injustice and cruelty. The Bishop and the Inquisitors in this danger immediately adjourned to the Church and performed the mass of Our Lady; just at the instant of the elevation, a voice was heard in the air pronouncing audibly and mournfully these words, O Guido Delacha, we have defended thee as long as we could; and now we can do it no longer, for one who is mightier than us hath conquered! With that the coffer was let fall into the flames, and the heretical remains were consumed.*

These fables, Sir, are set before the public in countries where the Bible is prohibited, and where your Church maintains the exclusive power which it would fain obtain every where,

* Andrade, 518.

and without which it will no where be contented. It is no exaggeration to affirm that more lying fictions have been written of the Virgin Mary, and published as truths, .. as proofs of the Roman Catholic doctrines, .. than all the stories that are extant of all the Greek and Roman gods, goddesses, and demigods, if they were collected from all the writers of antiquity. The books which are filled with them would form no inconsiderable division in an ecclesiastical library. The history of her images in the Portugueze dominions alone extends to ten volumes, each whereof, if translated, would fill three such as the present. Every celebrated image has had its history, .. I had almost said its biography, separately written; and I know not whether these histories contain more proofs of credulity, or of deceit, .. of popular weakness, or of priestcraft. In fraud it is, in gross and palpable fraud that they have all originated. I could specify fifty cases in which the trick is as obvious as in that of the last new N. Senhora, who to the discomfiture of the Cortes was installed at Lisbon. What think you of your Lady of the Pillar at Zaragoza, who came, pillar and all, from heaven, before Our Lady was there herself? What think you of your Lady of Loretto, who was

brought through the air and over the sea, house and all, by Angels?* And yet, Sir, you resent

* It is a relief to turn from these wicked fables to the language of a protestant divine, one from whom Mr. Butler has not withheld his praise, and who for clearness, and strength, and sobriety of intellect, has never been surpassed. "This relation of the blessed Virgin to our Lord, says Barrow, (vol. iv. 563. 4th Ed. 1818.) as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her, (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any queen or empress,) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers sorts of Christians; especially among the adherents to Rome. For,

"They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unsavoury, some hideously blasphemous titles, elogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon, the incommunicable prerogative of God Almighty and of our blessed Saviour; such as the Queen of Heaven, the Wealth of the World, the Mother of Mercies, the Spouse of God, Our Lady, (as if, beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the Church forgotten by St. Paul) with the like.

"They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption itself.

"They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strain; professing not only to serve her religiously, which the holy scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only, but ὑπερδουλεύειν, to do more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

"Who commonly do at the end of their works, join, praise be

a charge of idolatry and superstition against a Church in which such things are believed,.. of imposture and wickedness against a Church in which such things have been invented! You affect surprize and indignation at the imputation! You accept complacently a vote of public thanks from the British Roman-Catholic Association for refuting the calumny!

to God and to the blessed Virgin! as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessings or success upon our performances.

" All this they do, without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, all which do conspire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone, neither the holy Scripture nor the first Fathers excepting the blessed Virgin from the general rule, or taking notice of her as an object of our worship, but nipping the first essays of such a superstition in the Collyridians.

" Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices, we should carefully beware; the which as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure, and abuse the blessed Virgin, (making her name accessary to such enormous scandals,) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

" And I doubt not but εἴ τις αἴσθησις, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain doth distaste, loathe, disdain, and reject them; with a *Non nobis, Domine*, (Psalm 115.) Not unto us, O Lord; and with the Angel in the Apocalypse, "Ὁρα μή, *see thou do it not!*"

THE ROSARY.

THERE is another topic connected with the *hyperdulia,** super-service, or ultra-devotion to

* *Hyperdulia,* a word, says Dr. Clagett, which our people cannot understand better, than by knowing the practice which it is a name for.

"It is so vast a proportion of religious service which they render to her, it consists of so many parts and diversities, that it were a labour to recount them as particularly as the case would bear. It shall suffice to mention some of the principal heads. They worship her with religious prayers and vows. They erect Churches and Oratories for her service, where they worship her very Images and Pictures, and pretended Reliques. They make Rosaries, and compose hours, psalters, and other forms of devotion to her. They ask things of her, that are proper to be asked of God only. They burn Incense to her Images, and offer their very Sacrifice of the Mass in her honour.

"Now as to this, and all the rest, we cannot but stand amazed that this service of the blessed Virgin should grow to be one of the principal parts of their religion, when the Holy Scriptures have not given us the least intimation of rule or example for it, or of any doctrine or practice that leads to it. That it should be a main design of their Catechisms to instruct youth in the worship of the Blessed Virgin; of their sermons to excite the people to put confidence in her and to call upon her, for the present occasion; of their books of devotion to direct them to pray to her, and magnify her in formal invocations; of their confessors to enjoin penitents to say so many *Ave*

the Virgin, which may in this place properly be brought under your consideration. The facts which I shall bring forward may possibly induce you to doubt whether the charges which Protestant Christendom brings against the Church of Rome are so easily refuted as you perhaps may have imagined, as well as wished. I speak of the history and mystery of the Rosary, the practices connected with it, the morality deduced from it, and the miracles with which its use is said to have been introduced and repeatedly rewarded.

When or by whom this implement of devotion was invented, is a question concerning which antiquaries are divided. Some of that class

Marias in satisfaction for their sins, and to make at least as frequent applications to *Mary*, as to *Jesus* himself, for deliverance from sins and dangers: when not one word, not one intimation of any thing, like to any thing of all this is left upon record in the writings of the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*, from whom those men pretend to derive their religion, whose books are large enough for this so famous a service, to have been at least mentioned somewhere or other; and who without all doubt would have more than mentioned it, if it had been the religion of those times. This is that we must always wonder at, and so much the more, because the constant tenor of the Holy Scriptures bears against such practices as these, agreeably to that precept of both Testaments, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*"—Preservative against Popery, vol. i. p. 181.

who will hazard anything, say it is as old as the apostolic age, and that Bede was the person who restored its use: for the latter assertion they have a plausible argument, drawn from its English name (which has, however, a direct and obvious etymology in our old language); and they have a pretext in the undoubted fact that Bede at his death distributed certain *oraria* among his friends, to which this interpretation might well be applied.* But the opinion is not thought tenable. Peter the Hermit is said to have re-introduced it. It is certain, however, that no such implement was in general use before the twelfth century, when the Dominicans, according to their own statement, brought it into notice. They claim the credit of the invention for their Patriarch St. Dominic, ever-memorable, and in their language, ever-glorious, as the great founder of the Inquisition. It seems indeed likely that it should have come from Spain, for just such a prayer-string the Mahommedans adopted from the Hindoos,† and the Spaniards

* See note, p. 87. Perhaps it may favour this supposition that the fragments or rather joints of the Encrinus, or Stone Lily, which are found on the coast of Northumberland, are still called St. Cuthbert's beads.

† Major Moore in his Hindu Pantheon, (p. 21) supposes it to have originated there. It is used also in Tartary. Ysbraht's

probably learnt it from the Moors. Nor is it surprizing that the same usage should be found among people who differ so widely in the grounds of their belief; for when the opinion was once established, that prayers are taken by tale, some such device was necessary for those who might be desirous of keeping even scores, and knowing how their accounts stood with the other world.

The use of vain repetitions in devotion is one of those superstitions which may be derived from the Judaizing Christians. It was an axiom with the Jews* that every one who multiplies prayers is heard; and against this error Christ warned his disciples, thus condemning the notion that in such repetitions there can be either power or piety. I know not if there be an earlier example than that which Sozomen† mentions; and that points to a Jewish origin, for it occurred in Egypt. It is of a certain Paul

Idas (p. 36) describes a Lama at Jakutskoi, "who had such a string of beads in his hand, according to the Mongalian and Colmakkian fashion, which he very swiftly and incessantly turned over through his fingers, continually moving his lips as though he were at his private devotions; and with this perpetual telling of his beads, his thumb was worn through the flesh and nail up to the knuckle, which rubbing off by slow degrees did not at all pain him."

* Lightfoot's Works, xi. 140. † L. vi. c. xxix.

who resided at Pherme, where he had five hundred disciples. This person, having made a vow that he would say three hundred prayers every day, used to put that number of pebbles in his bosom when he began his task, and drop out one at the end of every prayer, that he might neither fail in the performance of his engagement, nor weary himself with any work of supererogation. In later times, and in our own country, the Lady Godiva, who figures so remarkably in the history of Coventry, counted her prayers upon a string of jewels, which at her death she bequeathed to an Image of the Virgin in that city.* The use of such bead-strings was common in the thirteenth century, and it appears that they were then, as now, divided into fifteen decads of smaller beads for the *Ave Maria,* with a larger one between each ten for the *Pater Noster.* They were then generally called Pater-Nosters. But it was not till the fifteenth century that their virtue was preached far and wide, and that the history and mystery of the Rosary were revealed.

Of all the tools, trinkets, or playthings of devotion, in whichever class we place it, the

* William of Malmsbury. Gest. Pont. Aug. l. iv. c. iv. p. 289. Acta SS. Aug. t. i. p. 434.

Rosary is certainly the happiest invention. Its mere picturesque effect might have brought it into general use, for beautiful it is, whether pendant from the neck of the young, or in the trembling hands of the aged. Nor is its use limited to the convenience of keeping a prayer account in decimals, and thus facilitating the arithmetic. If the *Ave Maria* were repeated the whole hundred and fifty times, or even a tenth part of those times, in uninterrupted succession, no human vigilance could prevent the words from being articulated without a thought of their meaning; but by this device, when ten *Aves* have been said, and ten of the smaller or *Ave* beads dropt to keep time with them, the *Pater* or large bead comes opportunely in to jog* the memory: sufficient attention is thus excited to satisfy the conscience of the devotee, and yet no effort, no fervour, no feeling are required; the understanding may go wander, the heart

* Mainauduc, the animal magnetist, understood and adopted this principle in his *Treatment*. "The mind," he says, "should be able to perform this work without any particular motions of the body, or of its extremities. But inexperience, and the frequent disturbances which occur to divert the attention, induce us to adopt some mode of action, whose constant repetition may attach, rouse, or recall the mind to the subject, when it becomes languid or diverted from its employment."—*Lectures*, p. 107.

may be asleep, while the lips with the help of the fingers perform their task; and the performer remains with a comfortable confidence of having added to his good works, and rests contented *opere operato*. The priests of the Romish Church have been wise in their generation, and the structure which they have raised is the greatest monument of human art, as it is of human wickedness,..so skilfully have they known how to take advantage of every weakness, and to practise upon every passion of human nature.

The person by whom the Rosary was brought into general use, and thereby such eminent service rendered to the Romish world in general, and of the Dominican family in particular, was the blessed Alanus de Rupe, or Alain de la Roche, a Breton by birth, a Dominican by calling, and one of the most intrepid dealers in pious fraud that ever did honour to his profession as a son of St. Dominic. Nevertheless, or rather therefore, he is the Blessed Alanus de Rupe, and with that designation his name stands in the Dominican Kalendar, for pious commemoration on the eighth of September.

The Rosary, he says, was used, as it now is, by the Saints Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, and Benedict, and this the Virgin herself told him. She told him also in what manner she

herself had caused the Society of the Rosary to be instituted, which it was his mission to extend. St. Dominic, when itinerating with one companion in Gallicia, was seized by a party of Moorish rovers who had landed near Compostella; they carried their prisoners on board, and put to sea. A storm arose, the vessel sprung a leak, the water came in so fast that the men swam in the ship; but though Dominic exhorted them to call upon the Virgin, who could save them, they answered him only by blaspheming. The tempest continued to rage through the night, and their condition appeared desperate, and would have been so had not the Saint been aboard. At dawn, on the day of the Annunciation, the Virgin appeared, not to him alone, but to the whole crew, and offered to forgive and deliver those guilty men if they would promise to recite the Rosary every day, and institute a fraternity who should duly perform the same act of acceptable devotion. If they would do this, he had only in her name and in her Son's, to bid the winds and the sea be still; if they refused, she would place him in safety, and leave the rest to suffer, body and soul, immediate death and everlasting punishment. No sooner had the Moors signified their joyful conversion and began to praise her, than

the Virgin, visibly conveyed the water-logged ship over the breakers safely to the shore; and voices, as dreadful as the storm, were heard from the sea, exclaiming, O this Dominic! he deprives us of our prey! he releases them with the Rosary! he chains us, he scourges us, he kills us with that Rosary! All the goods which they had thrown overboard to lighten the vessel, were found lying safely upon the strand; and the converts, being led in triumph to be baptized, became the first members of the Society of the Rosary. *

Neither the Law nor the Gospel were introduced with such appalling miracles as this device for making fingers and thumbs perform the work of prayer. When the same thaumaturgic St. Dominic was engaged in his crusade against the Albigenses, as he entered Thoulouse one day after one of his interviews with the Virgin, the bells, unmoved by human hands, rang to honour him; but the heretics neither heeded this manifestation of his sanctity, nor attended to his earnest exhortations that they should use the Rosary. Presently, therefore, a sudden darkness came over the heavens, a storm of wind and thunder arose, the whole firmament seemed ablaze with lightning, earth

* Possadas, 50.

shook, and the howling of affrighted animals was mingled with the cries and supplications of the terrified multitude. People of Thoulouse, said Dominic, it is the voice of God! I see before me an hundred and fifty Angels, whom Christ and his Mother have sent for your chastisement. Abjure your heresies, and take her for your advocate! There was an Image of the Virgin in the Church, where this was said, who raised her arm with a threatening gesture as he spake. Mark me! he continued, not while you persist in your wickedness, not till you supplicate her by reciting the Rosary, will that menace be withdrawn! The Devils yelled audibly at this, the congregation disciplined themselves and told their beads in all the sincerity of fear;* till the Thaumaturge being assured of their conversion, knelt before the Image to intercede for them; the Virgin then was appeased and put down her hand, and the storm ceased.

The prodigious virtues of the Rosary were manifested in a manner not less astounding at Carcassonne, where there dwelt so active and pertinacious a heretic, that Dominic, not being able to convert him by reasoning, (and as it appears, not having at that time the efficacious

* Possadas, 118.

means of fire and faggot at command,) complained to the Virgin what mischief this monster was doing to the cause of the faith; upon which a whole host of devils was sent into the heretic to punish his obstinacy, and give the Saint an opportunity of displaying his power. The energumen was in a dreadful state; and well he might be; for when in the presence of the people he was brought before Dominic for help, and the Saint, throwing a Rosary round his neck, commanded the foul fiends by virtue of that Rosary to declare how many they were, it appeared that they were not less than fifteen thousand in number: the heretic had blasphemed the Rosary, and for every decade of that sacred bead-string, a whole legion had entered him. Grievously, however, as he was tormented, the Devils themselves were not less so, when, being thus put to the question, they were compelled to answer all that the Saint asked. Was what he preached of the Rosary false, or was it true? They howled in agony at this, and cursed the tremendous power which they confessed. ..Whom did they hate most?.. Whom but Dominic himself, who was their worst enemy on earth! ..Which Saint in Heaven did they fear most, and to which might prayers with most confidence be addrest, and ought the

most reverence to be paid? So reluctant were they to utter the truth in this case, that they entreated he would be pleased to let them reply in private; and when he insisted upon a public answer, they struggled with such violence that fire issued from the eyes, mouth and nostrils of the miserable demoniac. Touched with compassion at the sight, Dominic adjured the Virgin by her own Rosary to have mercy upon him. Immediately Heaven opened, the blessed Virgin herself, surrounded with Angels, descended, touched the possessed with a golden wand, and bade the fiends make answer. Bitterly complaining of the force which was put upon them, they exclaimed at last, Hear, O ye Christians! this Mary the Mother of God is able to deliver her servants from Hell: one supplication of hers is worth more than all the prayers of all the Saints; and many have had their sins, unjustly as we think, forgiven them, for invoking her at the point of death. If she had not interposed, we should ere this have destroyed Christianity; and we confess and proclaim that no one who perseveres in her service and in the use of the Rosary can perish." The Rosary was then recited by all present at Dominic's command, and the fifteen thousand Devils were seen swarming out from the

body of the Energumen in sparks and flames of fire.*

By such miracles had St. Dominic introduced the use of the Rosary, and by others not less extraordinary had he proved its saving virtue. There was a damsel in Aragon, Alexandra by name, who, in consequence of his preaching, provided herself with one, and told her beads with sufficient regularity, but manifested no other amendment of life. Two rival suitors fought for her, and so unhappily, that both were killed, in revenge for which, the relations seized her, cut off her head, and threw it into a well. The Devils took possession of her soul, supposing they had a valid right to it; but therein they were deceived; for by using the Rosary she had obtained such favour in the eyes of the Virgin, that her soul was replevied and permitted to remain in the head and in the well, till an opportunity should offer for being confessed and shriven. Ere long the singular condition of this poor soul was revealed to Dominic, who incontinently repaired to the well and called upon Alexandra to come up. The bloody head rose, perched on the well side, and intreated his assistance, saying that she must pass two hundred

* Possadas, p. 126.

years in Purgatory, unless he and the Society of the Rosary would befriend her with their prayers. Then the head made confession, was absolved, and received the wafer; after which it continued by its discourses during two days to edify the people of Aragon. That done, it died; and at the end of fifteen days the soul appeared in glory to St. Dominic,* and thanked him for having by the Rosary delivered her from the place of penance.

Yet, though introduced and promulgated by such hyper-miraculous miracles, the Rosary had ceased to be in use, when, in the year 1460, the Virgin appeared to the Blessed Alain de la Roche, a Dominican Friar, belonging at that time to the Congregation of Holland; she regarded him with a sweet and dove-like expression, and asked of him if he were not aware that the form of devotion which the Patriarch and the brethren of his Order had instituted and propagated so greatly to her pleasure, and so profitably for Christendom, had fallen into neglect? By the *Ave Maria* it was, she said, that this world had been renovated, Hell emptied and Heaven replenished; and by the Rosary, which was composed of *Ave Marias*,

* Possadas, 266.

it was that in these latter times the world must be reformed. She had chosen him as her dearest and most beloved servant, to proclaim this, and exhort his brethren to proclaim it; and she promised to approve their preaching by miracles. With that, in proof of her favour,* she hung round his neck a rosary, the string whereof was composed of her own heavenly hair; and with a ring made of that same blessed hair she espoused him, and she blessed him with her virgin lips, and she fed him at her holy bosom!!! I thank God that long conversance with monastic writers has neither blunted my sense of such impieties, nor abated my abhorrence for the system of imposture and wickedness which has been raised and supported by such means. But those Protestants who will shudder while they read, (and many such I trust there are,) will know how fitting, how needful, it is that these impieties and frauds should be exposed to the people of Great Britain and Ireland at this time. Echard† would

* Rosario della Gloriosa Vergine Maria, ff. 11. Venice. 1597.

† Echard might deserve to be pitied, if any man could deserve compassion for the situation into which he brings himself by engaging in a system of fraud. In his case, as in most others, it was probably his misfortune, and not his fault, that he entered the Dominican Order; but no man can be acquitted

fain persuade us of what it was impossible he could believe himself,* that what the Blessed

of moral guilt, who takes upon himself to support a system which he knows and cannot but know to be founded upon imposture. Thus it is that he speaks of his predecessor Alanus de Rupe, "*revelationes ejus et visiones, sermones Sancti Dominici ipsi revelatos, exempla et miracula Rosarii: istas inquam, omnia non habenda, quasi revera exstiterint; sed meditationes tantùm esse viri pii, qui in hunc modum cogitationes suas efformabat, ut auditorum animis facilius illaberetur. Tale enim fuit ejus seculi ingenium, et tale etiamnum in quibusdam Europæ provinciis, ut auditores ejusmodi historiolis et exemplis magis delectentur, ea facilius memoriâ retineant, iis potentiùs et acriùs et a vitiis deterreantur et ad bonum moveantur, quàm ab accuratâ et solidâ doctrinâ, quæ mox ex eorum cordibus evanescit*... He specifies then some miracles which Alain relates of St. Dominic, and says, *quæ nisi modo quodam spirituali, meam fateor mentem excedente, explicentur, nescio, quis theologus ferat. Sunt alia plura hujus rationis; ut cum Dominicum sponsum beatæ Virginis vocat, quo titulo nec Sanctus se, nec illum vitæ ejus scriptores laudati ornarunt; vel cum Alanus ipse se à beatâ Virgine in sponsum acceptum, et torque in collo, annuloque in digito, utroque ex crinibus ipsius Virginis concinnè facto, ab ipsâ donatum, imò et ipsa ubera Virginea sugere sibi permissum, quod egerit avidiùs; quæ nisi spiritualiter intelligantur, vix capies, aut patieris.*"

Hear now his conclusion! *Hæc itaque esto nostra conclusio: vir fuit piissimus Alanus, cultui beatæ Virginis per Rosarium addictissimus, ecclesiastes salutis animarum sitientissimus: ejus visiones, revelationes, seu veriùs parabolæ ex eâ, quâ illas in concionibus depromebat, ratione, miros fructus ediderunt: sed nec in historiam trahito: hoc solum volo... Ex his tamen... contra Alani pieta-*

* Scriptores Ord. Predic. t. i. 851.

Alain says, was intended only to be taken in a spiritual sense; but Alain protests that what

tem nihil concludas."!!—(pp. 850. i.) Yes, Reader! from these flagitious impieties, you are to form no conclusion against the character of the blessed F. Alain de la Roche! They are only professional fictions and pious frauds! And therefore he is the blessed Alain, *notwithstanding* these things, with Echard, and *for* these things with the other writers of his Order!

The Bollandists were not bound to defend this impostor, because he was not a Jesuit, and was as yet only in the Dominican kalendar; nor did they think it necessary, as Echard had done, to apologize for him. Cuper, therefore, exposes the weakness, or rather the insincerity of Echard's dealing: "*Echardus præter morem suum, non satis clarâ argumentandi ratione nobis hic libenter persuaderet, ut omnes Alani visiones, seu revelationes pro piis ejus meditationibus, et falsas ipsius historias pro parabolis acciperemus, ac denique prodigiosa beneficia, quæ sibi cœlitùs collata fuisse asserit, spiritualiter intelligeremus. Sed videtur ipse Alanus hanc spiritualem interpretationem recusare, seu potius huic effugio viam præclusisse: nam . . . narrationem suam ita confirmat:* Hæc omnia piissima Dei genitrix Virgo Maria cuidam, quem desponsavit per annulum et Psalterium mirandum, ex crinibus ipsius Virginis Mariæ in collo sponsi pendens, narravit VISIBILITER et SENSIBILITER esse verissima." *Iste sponsus est ipsemet Alanus de Rupe, qui in memoratis opusculis se sæpius novellum Deiparæ sponsum appellat, ut omnes ejus laudatores ultro admittant. Cum autem Alanus hoc loco diserte asserat hæc omnia sibi* visibiliter et sensibiliter *fuisse revelata, quomodo verum dicet si ea cum Echardo tantum spiritualiter intelligerem velimus?*

Of Alain's other fables, the Bollandist proceeds to say, *quantum verò ad historicas ipsius narrationes attinet, hæ spiritualiter aut parabolicè explicari nequeunt, quandoquidem talibus locorum,*

he thus relates is matter of visible and palpable fact,* and imprecates in the name of the Trinity a curse upon himself, if what he says be false!

temporum ac personarum circumstantiis exornatæ sunt, ut omnia narrationis adjuncta clament, aut illas historias revera contigisse, aut fraudulenter conflctas esse.

Alain, according to a practice common in his day among monastic writers, had referred to certain imaginary manuscripts as his authorities. In one case of this kind he introduces his solemn oath that what he writes had been confirmed by immediate miracle: ... *hæc majoris confirmationis gratiâ subjungit:* In Legendâ S. Thomæ pro parte sunt scripta, qui fuit Hispanus, et sancti patris nostri Dominici socius, ex quâ Legendâ et pluribus aliis Legendis facta quæ nunc de Dominico dicta sunt, fuerunt extracta, *et sunt nuper per revelationem Christi et Virginis Mariæ confirmata cum signis magnis et portentis:* ET DE OMNIBUS HIS FIDEM ET TESTIMONIUM SUB JURAMENTO FIDEI TRINITATIS PERHIBEO, SUB PERICULO OMNIS MALEDICTIONIS MIHI INFLIGENDÆ, IN CASU QUO DEFICIO A VERITATIS RECTO TRAMITE. *Sic sæpe alibi revelationes suas jurejurando confirmat, et portentosas historias probat auctoritate Johannis de Monte et Thomæ de Templo, in quorum libris eas a se lectas fuisse testatur. Si Alanus visiones ac revelationes suas pro meditationibus acrifi voluisset, quomodo eas juramento confirmasset? Si historiæ ejus narrationes parabolicè sint intelligendæ, cur ad earum parabolarum confirmationem citat testes, quos sub nomine veterum allegat? Quomodo denique Alanus sine mendacio dicere potuit, sese historias illas legisse apud scriptores, qui juxta opinionem Echardi numquam in rerum naturâ exstiterunt?*

Cuper proceeds to observe that Alain is called the Blessed by Dominican writers, and inserted with that appellation in their

* Acta SS. Aug. t. i. 365.

An excuse has been suggested by Cuper, that these impious falsehoods and imprecations are not Alain's, but were interpolated in his writings after his death. Were this proved;

kalendar. Repeating then that the said Alain had invented whole stories from beginning to end, had sworn that they were revealed to him, and had confirmed them by the feigned testimony of supposititious writers, he ingenuously confesses (in his own words) that he cannot reconcile so many plain and sworn falsehoods with the imputed holiness of the author. And the only excuse which he can imagine is a doubt whether these things were not interpolated in Alain's writings after his death, inasmuch as having been *doctissimus theologus, . . non videtur numerandum inter simplices illos viros, qui pietatis loco duxerint mendacia pro religione fingere, ut Ludovicus Vives et post ipsum Melchior Canus de nonnullis conqueruntur.*—Acta SS. Aug. t. i. 365, 6.

Thus rationally could a Jesuit investigate the pious frauds of a Dominican! And what better evidence would you desire than that of Cethegus against Cataline, . . than that of a fellow professor in the same craft? Had he been cross-examined concerning the legends of his own Order, his power of deglutition would have been restored, and his throat at once have recovered its elasticity, as if he had been miraculously cured of a quinsey.

The practice which he has thus exposed in a single instance, is that which has been carried on systematically by all the monastic families in all their branches, (a charge abundantly and irrefragably proved by the invaluable work wherein these very remarks are introduced,) . . it is what the Romish Clergy practised even before those Orders were established; and it is what they are carrying on at this day, . . as witness the Life and Revelations of Sister Nativity.

instead of being, as it is, merely a gratuitous supposition, to what would it amount? only to this, that one Dominican instead of another was the criminal: for the impiety and the falsehood, the motive and the intentional deceit, are the same. Whether they are affiliated upon John Doe or Richard Roe, John Nokes or Jack à Stiles, they belong to the craft which has adopted them. They are chargeable upon the Order which brought them forth and acknowledged them for its proper offspring: they are chargeable upon the Church which has received them and built upon them one of its most popular practices of superstition. Received them it has by setting its sanction upon the numerous books in which they are contained. Pius V. has even sanctioned one of the most mostrous of these fables, by alleging it in a Bull, and it is inserted in the Breviary which Benedict XIII. set forth.* And the popular

* "*Ex his igitur concludimus, sacram Rituum Congregationem, et Benedictum XIII. à nobis in hac re non exigere majorem fidem historicam, quam mereatur auctoritas Alani Rupensis.*" And Cuper, who says this, quotes Benedict himself as saying, before he was raised to the Papacy, that all things in the Breviary are not true! "*Nec enim Ecclesia ipsa, quæ iis utitur, inconcussæ infallibilisque veritatis judicat, quæcumque Breviariis suis sunt inserta; cum multoties pro variis temporibus varia ex occasione ea mutaverit, correxeritque... Quæ omnia argumento sunt: Bre-*

books of devotion concerning the Rosary relate or refer to these revelations and favours which Alain pretended to have received from the Virgin, as arguments for its use.

With such fables in his mouth, and with a collection of rosaries in his hand, Alain preached up the efficacy of his wares through the Low Countries; the brethren of his Order seconded him zealously, and this new and mechanical devotion presently made its fortune. The Emperor Frederic III. brought it into fashion, and was followed by Kings, Dukes, Princes, Lords, Prelates, Masters in Theology, Doctors, Religioners, Gentry, Citizens, Artisans and men of all descriptions, as well as by Queens, Duchesses, Princesses, Baronesses, Abbesses, Nuns, Sisters and Ladies of all sorts.* It was boldly affirmed that innumerable miracles approved the peculiar virtues of the practice which was

curia non illico putandâ esse ab omni historicâ aberratione liberâ, sed magnâ plerumque spongiâ egere, licet illa in summi usum usurpet Ecclesia. (Acta SS. Aug. t. i. 428.) Benedict XIII. however, did not use the sponge when it was in his power to have used it, and what are we to think of a Church which compels its priests to read in their service, and deliver to the people as truths, legends which they themselves know, and cannot but know, to be fabulous?

* Rosario, p. 12.

thus introduced; that persons were delivered by it from dangers, diseases, sin and infamy, and that the dead were raised. It was not long before a means for extending its use more widely, and enhancing its benefits to all who used it, was devised by F. Jacob Spenger, Prior of the Dominican Convent at Cologne, and afterwards Provincial of that Province. This was by instituting an association, called the Society of the Rosary, the object of which may be made generally intelligible in these days by explaining that it was to be a Joint Stock Prayer Company.

The Rosary itself was a device for making devotion easy by a manual operation; and this Society was one from which "neither the husbandman in the fields, nor the traveller on his journey, nor the labourer with his toiling, nor the simple by his unskilfulness, nor the woman by her sex, nor the married by their estate, nor the young by their ignorance, nor the aged by their impotency,* nor the poor for want of ability, nor the blind for want of sight," should be excluded. The performance of its conditions being so easy that it required "no more knowledge than to say the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*,

* Society of the Rosary, p. 3.

nor more charge than the price of a pair of beads, nor any choice of place or situation of body, but as it shall like the party, either to stand, sit, lie, walk, or kneel: and "having no burden of conscience, or charge of sin, if it be omitted, who seeth not, says an English Romanist, how easy it is, and with what facility it may be observed? Yea who seeth not how great and careless a negligence, and how contemptuous a singularity it were to omit so general a profession?"*

* It was especially recommended to the English Romanists, as "an ancient means, even from St. Dominic's time of rooting out heresy." (Societie of the Rosary. Preface to the Reader.) St. Dominic having devised it as an "antidote against that most pestiferous poison of the Albigean heresy,"... it "proved so prevalent and successful that soon after that infernal fire was quenched, that contagious current was stopt, that wicked heresy was utterly abolished. If we therefore lay hold of the same means, make use of the same remedy, and present the like humble and hearty petitions to the same Mother of Mercy and Power, we may also hope to obtain the same happy effects; and to see these our blind adversaries enlightened, these strayed sheep reduced, these our obstinate countrymen converted. It is therefore convenient for all Christians, and proper for us in particular, to practise this sort of piety and devotion to God's glory, his Mother's honour, and the extirpation of heresies." —*Jesus, Maria, Joseph, or the Devout Pilgrim of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary.* Published for the benefit of the pious Rosarists, by A. C. and T. V. Religious Monks of the Holy Order of St. Bennet. Amsterdam, 1657.—p. 69.

The Virgin, it should be remembered, is represented by the

The terms of admission were as easy as the practice. The applicant had only to appear in a Dominican Church and desire to be enrolled in the books of the Society. No fee might be required for matriculation; and if the opportunity were taken for asking alms for the Convent, the applicant was warned not to give them,* the Virgin having been pleased to direct that this her own fraternity should be immaculate on that score. The Dominicans could very well afford their trouble, seeing she had not directed that Rosaries should either be supplied or blest gratuitously.† There was a form of prayer for blessing them, in which the Almighty is implored to infuse so much virtue of the Holy Spirit into the beads, that

Romanists as the great destroyer of heresies. And the English Romanist, who in Elizabeth's reign, as it appears, (for the book is without date,) set forth this "Societie of the Rosary," says that that Society is now undoubtedly offered by the Virgin herself to her country. (Preface.)

* So it is stated in the Italian Rosario. But in one of the English books I find this "*Annotation.*" "The receiving of what is freely given, and offered by devout persons, either for the ornament of the altar, or for the entertainment of him that serves the altar, or for the succouring of the poor members of the Confraternity, is not forbidden."—*Jesus, Maria, Joseph.* 108.

† Rosario, ff. 33.

whosoever wears the string, and keeps it reverently in his house, should always and every where be delivered from all ghostly and bodily enemies in this world, and deserve in the next to be by the Virgin Mary presented to Him as one full of good works. The popular opinion in Romish countries is, that the beads are of no virtue unless the priest has consecrated them. Whether prayers which are told upon an unblest string would be rejected altogether, or merely reduced to the common standard of value, might be a case for the casuists in divinity to determine.

Even upon the more favourable decision there would be a lamentable fall in the value of Purgatory stock. When Alain de la Roche first brought the Rosary into vogue, there were persons who ventured to object to it as a superstitious practice; and in consequence of their opposition, Francis Duke of Britanny and Marguerite his wife applied to Pope Sixtus IV. for an approbation of it, which the Pope granted accordingly, with an indulgence of five years and five quarantines* for every fifty recitations of the string, notwithstanding the Apostolical

* "A Quarantine is as much as if he had fasted a whole Lent, according to the custom."—*Jesus, Maria, Joseph*, p. 91.

Constitutions, or any thing whatever which might seem to invalidate his grant. This, however, is a mere trifle compared to the indulgences*, which were afterwards conferred upon F. Jacob Spenger's new Society. The member, upon the day that he is enrolled in this confraternity, having confessed and communicated, and recited a third part of the Rosary, obtains a plenary indulgence and remission of all his sins. Once in his life, and at the time

* It is proper to transcribe here what the Religious Monks A. C. and T. V. premise when, in their own language, they "produce the promised Treasures of the Indulgences conferred upon the confraternity of the Rosary.

"First, we shall mention none but such as are expressly avouched by approved and authentical authors, and directly drawn out of the Pope's Bulls and Indults. For since Clement V. in the Council of Vienna hath imposed a formal precept in virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of incurring eternal damnation, on all such as shall presume to promulgate any *indiscrete*, that is (as the Gloss in *Clem. Verb. Religiosi* explicates) not granted Indulgences, we have carefully, as behoves us, endeavoured to avoid the penalty, by diligently and painfully examining each particular concession here set down and delivered.

"Secondly, we shall purposely omit the multitude of less Indulgences, which remit certain days, years, and quarantines of enjoined penances, and set down only the plenary Indulgences, which are abundantly numerous to satisfy the most covetous Christian's devotion."—p. 94.

of his death, any priest whom he may chuse is empowered to confer upon him the like. And he gains a plenary also in the hour of death, either having confessed and communicated, or saying Jesus Maria orally or mentally, or invoking in like manner the name of Jesus alone, or having a consecrated candle of the Society in honour of the Virgin in his hand at the time of his departure. This is not all. A plenary may be gained every first Sunday of the month for confessing and communicating, or for visiting the altar of the Rosary, or being present at its procession. A plenary in like manner upon the Seven Feasts of the Virgin, and with this farther facility, that being contrite, with a will to confess and communicate at fit time, is accepted for the deed. A plenary for saying the Mass of the Rosary, causing it to be said, or hearing it. A plenary for reciting the whole Rosary, *toties quoties:* and for visiting the Chapel of the Rosary on the days in which its fifteen mysteries are celebrated. A soul is delivered out of Purgatory as often as a whole Rosary is recited for the dead, or the Mass of the Rosary celebrated for them. All these indulgences may be obtained by proxy for the absent or for the dead. And the members of the society may gain a plenary for themselves, and deliver a soul out

of Purgatory every day in the year, and every hour in the day.

Here, Sir, I have set before you, from one of your own books of devotion, (and among all my books there is no other which bears such marks of thumb-unction,) the privileges of the Society of the Rosary, as granted by successive Popes, published by their authority, and proclaimed in all Romish countries from the pulpit, and in the streets and highways. You have put questions to me, as a man, as a gentleman, and as a Christian, which shall be fully answered in due time. In this place I must ask of you, whether you believe that the Rosary, with the custom of saying prayers to it by the half-score, is a divine or a human invention? for if you do not unequivocally believe it to have been invented and introduced by the Virgin herself, recommended by her in person, in visible and tangible apparition, and approved by innumerable miracles of the most stupendous kind, you must allow that a system of imposture has in this instance been carried on in the Romish Church, gross, palpable, impious imposture, which the heads of that Church have sanctioned, adopted, and promulgated. Allow me to ask also whether you believe that any authority which, according to your faith, may have been devised to the Bishops

of Rome, could empower them to open the gates of Heaven upon such terms as they hold out to the Society of the Rosary? Whether such privileges, attached to such a Joint Stock Prayer Company, are consistent with right reason, and reconcileable with the doctrines of the Gospel?? and whether it be calumnious to charge the Romish Church with superstition, when its people put their trust in such dead and worthless works as these, and are encouraged by their pastors to trust in them???

If, however, neither reason nor scripture afford the slightest ground for defending this practice, you have miracles to adduce in its favour. That most illustrious of all story-tellers, Sultaness Scheherazade herself had not more wonderful tales in store to produce at Sister Dinarzade's morning call, in the hope of keeping her head upon her shoulders, than I could supply you with upon this subject. With what delight must that *Cavallero* have persevered in using the Rosary, who saw that every bead as he told it was taken by an Angel and carried to the Queen of Heaven, who forthwith magnified it to her purpose, and with the whole string constructed a gorgeous palace* upon one of the

* Possadas, p. 284. Rosario, ff. 221.

celestial mountains! With what zeal must that holy man have exhorted others to enroll themselves in this Association, who, being rapt in spirit, heard the whole host of Heaven recite the Rosary around the Throne, and, having concluded, return thanks to God for the souls which by virtue of the Rosary were saved, and join in prayers for all who said their beads upon earth, and especially for those who belonged to the Society! * Can we wonder that a whole band of robbers were converted, bought each a rosary, and all became Monks or Friars, because, going in their vocation upon the high way, they had fallen in with a religious man who was telling his beads, and behold a rose came out of his mouth with every *Ave*, and a gillyflower with every *Pater*, and an Angel gathered them from his lips, wreathed them, † and crowned with this mystic coronal the happy but unconscious devotee?

"Shall I tell you, Sir, of the Italian bandit who, having received a rosary from St. Dominic himself, while that prodigious Saint was living, said it regularly every day, and commended himself to the Virgin, while he continued to rob and murder as usual? He died,

* Rosario, ff. 247. † Andrade, 592.

unhouselled, in his sins, and was interred by his comrades in the fields without any rites of burial. Two years afterward, when the Saint, with some of his disciples, was passing by, a voice was heard from the ground, saying, Father St. Dominic, have mercy upon me! All apprehended that it issued from a grave, though they knew not that any grave was there; and digging, as the Saint commanded them, where the voice was heard, they uncovered the robber, who arose from the grave in a state which can neither properly be called dead nor alive; for, though dead, his soul was still in his body, and he was in full possession of all his faculties. Prostrating himself before St. Dominic, he told him that, for the sake of that rosary which he had received from his hands, Our Lady had kept him in this miraculous state of preservation till he should have an opportunity of confessing and being absolved; otherwise he must inevitably have gone straight to Hell; and that what he had endured during the two years of his interment would serve him for his Purgatory. Accordingly he was shriven in due form, and went direct to Heaven,*..to the comfortable encouragement of all Italian robbers who carry a beadstring.

* Andrade, 614.

Neither less great nor better deserved was the good fortune of Jacob the usurer, who in happy hour bought himself a rosary, though for show rather than for use; and recited it sometimes, more for form than in devotion. Repeatedly he was admonished by the Virgin, and more than once miraculously delivered by her from present death; but warnings and deliverances alike were lost upon him; he went on heaping up riches unrighteously as long as he lived, and when he died the Devils seized him as their due. The Devils were deceived, for on the way to Hell they were intercepted by the Virgin and the Archangel Michael. The latter had the fatal scales in his hand; trial was agreed to on both sides; all Jacob's deeds were weighed in the balance, and his good ones were like a feather against his many and ponderous sins, till the Virgin threw his rosary into the light scale;* immediately it preponderated, the other side kicked the beam, and the usurer was carried triumphantly to Heaven.†

But what is this to the stupendous and dreadful adventure of the two Students at Louvain, which happened in that famous and most

* Rosario, 227. † Andrade, 614.

Romish University, in the year 1600, and is related by Andrade on the authority of an eye-witness, who afterwards suffered martyrdom in Japan. The students were friends and chums, a word so nearly obsolete that it may be proper perhaps to explain it as meaning chamber-fellows. They were associated in profligacy also, and one night were engaged together in the worst company till a late hour, when one of them, tired with riotous debauchery, left the party in spite of his companion's raillery, and returned to his lodging. He was so weary that he had almost forgotten to say his rosary as usual, and, when he remembered it, was very much inclined to dispense that night with the trouble. Half rousing himself, however, and at the same time half asleep, he went through the string, in a perfunctory manner, without the slightest devotion, or hardly a thought of what he was about; and having finished, began to undress himself in all haste, when a loud knocking at the door startled him. Alarmed, as well as surprized, at so rude and unseasonable a visit, he asked who was there; but the only reply was, Open the door! He repeated his question, and the voice replied, Open! or, if it be not opened, I will enter. Why enter then! said he,..little expecting that the act would follow

the word; and instantly his chum stood before him with a pale and livid countenance, and an expression in it alike mournful and ghastly. The Student's knees shook, and his speech failed, nor was his terror abated when the ghost, for such it was, asked if he did not know him, and, bewailing the hour of his miserable birth, told him how that night, when they were both alike engaged in debauchery, the Devil had preferred his accusation against them, laid the process of their offences before the throne of God, and asked permission to take away their lives, and plunge their souls in hell, according to their deserts. Their sins had been so manifold that the Judge signified his consent; but at that critical instant the survivor was saying his beads; and though he said them without a feeling of devotion, the compassionate goodness of Our Lady was so great that she interceded for him, and obtained a respite that he might repent and be saved. But for me, miserable me, the Ghost continued, I had said no rosary, so for me there was none to mediate! The Devil, therefore, as I was returning home, met me in the street, and twisted my neck; there my body lies dead, where he left it, and for my soul, see what is its condition! With that he unbuttoned his waistcoat, and disclosed his

inner parts wrapt in flames, and filled with devouring snakes. The live Student swooned at the sight; the dead one with dreadful cries departed to his place of torment; and when the survivor came to his senses, he made a vow that he would turn Friar. Just then the bells of the Recollets rung to matins; he hastened to their Church, telling his beads devoutly as he went, threw himself at the Guardian's feet, and entreated him to assist a poor sinner who had just escaped from the very jaws of Hell. When he had told his dreadful tale, two Friars were sent to verify it, by looking for the corpse; they found it with the head twisted half round, blacker and uglier than a devil, and they brought it to the convent. In the morning the people were convoked there, the circumstances were related, and the body produced in proof: the Student took the habit in the presence of the whole city; his companion was buried in the fields, like a dog, as one for whom the suffrages of the Church could be of no avail; many Students, warned by this portentous event, forsook the world, and took the vows;* and upon the faith of one of these converts the story was recorded by the Venerable Father Alonso de Andrade, Calificador of the Inquisition.

* Andrade, 560.

"Why this is a more exquisite miracle than the other!" And yet there are others more exquisite than this. Shall I tell you of the Valencian gallant,..but no; that story is positively too good to be told in prose; and these may suffice as samples of the miracles by which the Romanists are persuaded to put their trust in the Rosary and in the Virgin Mary,..of the fables which are related, not as fables, but as truths by the Romish Clergy, in treatises of divinity, in books of popular devotion, and in sermons,..of the manner in which they delude the people. Beausobre has well said that *les plus hardis imposteurs étoient les plus applaudis: le mensonge n'avoit point de frein, et n'en a pas encore dans les lieux où la Réformation n'a point pénétré.*"* As the vain repetition of words, which in themselves are no prayer, addressed to one unto whom, if there be any force in reason, if there be any truth in Scripture, prayer ought not to be addressed; as this vain repetition, connected with a mechanical practice of piety,† a scheme of finger and thumb worship,

* Sur les Adamites, p. 321.

† Madame de Sevigné used to say that the Rosary was not a devotion, but a distraction. In one of her letters she says, "*Le bon Abbé prie Dieu sans cesse; j'écoute ses lectures saintes; mais quand il est dans le chapelet, je m'en dispense, trouvant que je rêve bien sans cela.*"—t. vi. p. 368.

proves the charge of superstition and creature-worship upon the Church of whose usages it makes so conspicuous a part; the means whereby it is recommended prove also the charge of imposture upon all persons concerned in inventing, sanctioning, and circulating these fables as miraculous proofs in favour of a superstitious and idolatrous usage. "O wicked imagination, whence camest thou in to cover the earth with deceit!"*

SLAVES OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

THE Society of Slaves of the Virgin is another branch from the same root of superstition. The origin of this fraternity has been traced with little foundation to the Hungarian King St. Stephen,† who is said to have made over himself, his new kingdom, and all his subjects in fee simple to the Virgin; the Hungarians at that time calling themselves her slaves in conformity to his pleasure, and always entitling her their Mistress or Lady, and bowing the knee and the head whenever her name was mentioned. Hence Hungary was called the family or house-

* Ecclesiasticus, xxxvii. 3.

† Yepes, vi. ff. xliv. Acta SS. Sept. i. 531. ib. Sept. vi. 722.

hold of the Blessed Virgin.* St. Gerard has the credit of having been the King's adviser on this occasion. Little, however, is heard of any such fraternity till it was brought into vogue in Spain by P. M. Fr. Antonio de Alvarado, Abbot of the Royal Monastery of Yrache in Navarre, in the early part of the seventeenth century. For the Benedictines, to whom civilization in their earlier, and literature in their later ages, have been so deeply beholden, used to vie with the Mendicant Orders in bringing forward extravagant legends, and introducing new practices of superstition to gratify and to delude the people. In this instance they were so successful that ere long there was scarcely a village in Spain without one of these fraternities:† and the rules of the Society, with its service and manual of devotions, were published in our own language for the use of English Romanists. The edifying example of Marino, brother of St. Peter Damian, was set before them, who, "unclothing himself of his garments, and putting about his neck the belt wherewith he was

* Macedo. Divi Tutelares, 359. This Jesuit assures us that the English used to stand in the same relation as the Hungarians to the Virgin Mary, and that England, in former times, was called her Dowry.—Ib. 453.

† Yepes, ff. li.

girded, delivered himself up to the Sacred Virgin, before her altar, as a bondslave, and, treating himself as such, whipt himself there before her, intreated her to accept him as a slave, submitting the neck of his prostrate heart to the empire of her powers," and laying a certain sum upon the altar, promised yearly to pay it as the tribute of his servitude. In return for this the Virgin visited and comforted him at his death, "a most lively and memorable example to excite posterity to the like devotion."

The two religious monks of St. Bennet who recommended the society to their countrymen, assured them, they may piously believe it was invented by divine inspiration. The persons who enrolled themselves were to wear "some little material chain or manacle of iron," about the middle, neck, or arms, for blessing and sprinkling which chain there is a form of prayer. Among other exercises they were to offer up a crown, consisting of these five precious jewels, in honour of their Lady's five principal virtues, the jasper of faith, the emerald of hope, the ruby of charity, the diamond of fortitude, and the pearl of chastity. They were expected also to pay "some annual tribute (how little soever it be) in token of the homage

and servitude due to her sovereign empire, at some altar dedicated to her honour,"—one object in all these inventions being to bring grist to the mill.

The Collyridians could not have gone farther in their worship of the Virgin whom they deified, than these Bondsmen were instructed to do in the prayers which were prepared for their use. We read in these that "the mystery of the Incarnation is divided between the sacred Trinity and the Virgin, who share the glory of this great work between them! that the person of the Virgin is greater than all human and angelical persons together; that she constitutes an order, empire and universe apart, which is conjoined to the hypostatical union! and that as the Father and Son are united by the Holy Spirit, so the Father and the Virgin are united by the Son!"*

And now, Sir, I have produced proof that in the Roman Catholic Church the Virgin Mary is represented as something *more than a creature*; that the people are taught to put their trust in her *more* than in God, and to believe that she can *command* her Son. Every fact which I have stated, every false miracle which I have ad-

* Jesus, Maria, Joseph, second appendix, pp. 538, 587.

duced, is taken directly from your own books; and you know, Sir, that such books are not permitted to be printed, till they have been revised, licensed and approved. It is well that when such curses as those of Mr. Gother and Dr. Challoner are denounced, the power does not accompany the will. You have presented their anathema, which strikes the great majority of the Roman Catholic world, as if it expressed your own sentiments; and yet I hope and believe, Sir, that were you called upon to pronounce a solemn "so be it" to the imprecation, you would hesitate; or rather you would not hesitate, but say with your St. Odilo, *si damnandus sum, malo damnari de misericordiâ, quàm de duritiâ.**

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE HYPERDULIA.

HAVING thus seen, as Usher says, "what kind of monster is nourished in the Papacy under that strange name of Hyperdulia," if we inquire how it arose, it will be found to have originated not so much in error as in deceit. The superstition did not, like the worship of

* Martene et Durand. Coll. Amp. t. v. 994.

relics, grow from the abuse of a natural feeling; nor is it one into which men were led by credulity and apparent experience, as in the case of those curative miracles which were ascribed to the Saints. There is no other foundation for it than what existed in Paganism.

Throughout the heathen world the goddesses appear to have been objects of more especial veneration than the gods, though mythological fables generally represented them rather as more vindictive than more placable. At first the desire of vying with Paganism tended to bring on this great corruption, .. afterwards the system of accommodating Christianity to the old religion; a system of which proofs abundant and indubitable are at this day manifest in the rites, ceremonies,* practices and opinions of the Romish Church. The Jesuits have told us of a female devotee in Japan, who spent her life in invoking the name of Amida, uttering it, they say, 140,000 times in the course of every day and night; they converted her, and she then uttered the name of Mary in its stead, neither varying the mode nor abridging the labour of

* The reader who may be well acquainted with Middleton's Letter from Rome will find much additional light thrown upon this important subject in Mr. Blunt's Vestiges of Ancient Manners in Italy and Sicily.

her devotion.* The conversions were not very different from this, which were made when the Goddesses of Egypt, and Syria, and Greece, and Rome were superseded by the Magna Mater of the Paganizing Christians. It mattered not to the makers of silver shrines whether they wrought for Diana or for another divinity, so the magnificence and the craft by which they had their wealth, remained the same. Painters were equally willing to forsake Isis for a patroness whose pictures were in greater demand. The worshippers of Cybele transferred their festival from the Fasti to the Kalendar: the day was the same, and they addressed the object of their adoration as *Mater Dei* instead of *Mater Deûm.* They who were converted from their belief in Astarte, were still encouraged in burning incense to the Queen of Heaven. I need not instance the conformity which was prepared for the votaries of Juno: upon that point the extravagance of Romish impiety has gone farther than a Protestant may describe without a feeling of profanation.

Thus easily was the predilection gratified which prevailed every where for a female object of adoration. The name which was adored

* Vieyra. Sermoens, t. viii. 49.

was changed, not the spirit of the worship. And as there are cases in which it is known that an old idol retained its place and its honours under a new appellation; so a suspicious resemblance has been noticed between some of the oldest and most famous Images of the Virgin, and the coarse objects of earlier idolatry, which in like manner were said not to have been made by hands, but to have been sent from heaven.

The men by whom the prodigious structure of the Romish Church was erected were wise in their generation, according to that wisdom which is not of a better world than this wherein we have our present existence. They flattered the inclinations and the weakness of human nature as much in this point, as they condescended to old habits and rooted superstitions. For to those who can be content with creature-worship, and who are ignorant of the scriptures, what more attractive object of adoration could be presented than the Virgin Mother of our Lord? Did we meet with such a personage in some system of heathen mythology, we should perceive how beautifully the character had been conceived, as much as we now perceive how inconsistent it is with uncorrupted Christianity. To this attractiveness we may ascribe much of

the indiscrete and reprehensible language in the fathers which prepared the way for the Hyperdulia. But that great corruption was in a far greater degree promoted by the rivalry of particular Churches, and of different religious orders, vying with each other in the fables whereby they set forth their own pretensions to public favour. Hence the enormous legends of Our Ladies of the Pillar and of Montserrat; hence the celebrity of the Ladies of Guadalupe and Nazareth, of Halle and Montaigu, and of our own Walsingham, before all this trumpery was whisked off in a whirlwind. Hence the reputation of so many other such shrines at which all prayers were to be heard and all diseases cured. And hence the less pardonable falsehoods by which every order in its turn represented itself as enjoying in a peculiar degree the Mighty Mother's patronage. She fancies a habit for one, favours another with the cut of a hood, and invents a scapulary or a string of beads. Hence the fooleries and blasphemies with which the Seraphic and Cherubic friars strove to surpass each other, the revolting impieties which they related in books and sermons, and represented in pictures, and which instead of exciting horror and indignation proved so gainful to these audacious impostors,

that earlier and later orders were tempted to try their fortune in the same kind of manufacture. Referring only to the abominable tales concerning St. Dominic and the Virgin, which have been closely imitated by the Cistercians, I will instance in this place a fable of such a character, that where it failed to excite disgust, we might suppose it would provoke ridicule, and yet we shall see with what success it was hazarded.

St. Dominic in one of his visions was carried before the Throne of Christ. Looking around him in heaven, as it was natural he should, he saw there monks, friars, and nuns in abundance, but not a single one of his own order: upon which he broke out in lamentations, and ventured to ask the reason of so mortifying a disappointment. Our Lord laid his hand upon the Virgin's shoulder, benignly answering, I have committed your followers to my Mother's care; and she opening her mantle, discovered an innumerable number of Dominicans nestling under it.

Benignamente, vi prego, ascoltate
La bella istoria!

You have it upon the authority of that ancient author F. Thedorick de Appoldia, who by command of the general of the order, composed a

life of the Saint before the end of the thirteenth century.* St. Antonine gave the tale the sanction of his sanctity by repeating it; a host of shaven and shorn Cherubics have followed him; and to crown all, it is inserted in the Dominican† Breviary, as part of the Church service on St. Dominic's day!!!

But *pereant qui ante nos nostra dixissent*, may the Dominicans have said upon this occasion, for a Cistercian had had just such a vision before them, and seen his brethren occupying the same place! How were these revelations to be reconciled? The Cistercian saw no Dominicans under the aforesaid mantle, the Dominican saw no Cistercians there! And yet they who maintained the credit of the one vision, could not with decency impugn the other. It was agreed therefore that this high prerogative belonged to both orders; and to this decision the Jesuit Cuper, after summing up the case, gives his assent, declaring on the part of his brethren that they perceived no reason why the vision should not have been vouchsafed both to a Cistercian and a Dominican, seeing the Blessed Virgin had conde-

* Acta SS. Aug. t. i. p. 583.

† Breviarium S. Ordinis Prædicatorum. Parisiis. 1647. p. 68.

scended to bestow the same favour upon *their* humble* society also! Here then, Sir, are three orders under the Virgin's cloak; and if you refer to the *Flores Seraphici*† of F. Charles de Aremberg, you will find a covey of Capuchines in the same cover. You remember, Sir, where Chaucer places the departed friars in his Sompnour's Tale? In these legends we have the origin of that satire, and the proof how well it was deserved.

But what carried the Hyperdulia to its height was the Franciscan tenet of the Virgin's immaculate conception. When the Dominicans, in an unlucky hour, found themselves pledged to support the unpopular side of that question, they strove to counteract the prejudice which was thus excited against them, by exaggerating her prerogatives, as well as by inventing legends to prove how greatly she delighted in their order and in its founder. The Franciscans would not be outdone in this line of invention, and thus the

* *Certè non videmus, cur similis visio monacho Cisterciensi, et S. Dominico offerri non potuerit, cum beatissima Virgo minimam nostram societatem eodem favore dignata est!*—Acta SS. Aug. t. ii. p. 468.

They may be *seen* there in Tanner's *Societas Jesu usquè ad sanguinis et vitæ profusionem militans.*—P. 5. Pragæ. 1675.

† Page 63.

two most mendacious fraternities that the world has ever seen, were engaged in a competition of impiety and imposture. Benedictines, Carmelites, Carthusians, and Jesuits could not remain silent, lest they might seem wanting in this popular part of their faith, and out of favour in the Court of Heaven. The more hyperbolical the language which was used, the better was it adapted to the taste of the multitude; the more superstitious the practices of piety which were introduced, the more acceptable were they to a people who were forbidden to read the Bible, and taught to rely upon their own works. There are cases in which the most opposite parties can be brought to act together when they either have, or fancy that they have a common interest in view: we have an example at this day in the confederacy between the British and Irish Romanists, the Socinians, the Unbelievers, and that part of the Dissenters who adhere more faithfully to the political temper, than to the religious principles of their Puritan ancestors, the Saints of the Rebellion. As these discordant bodies are now uniting their efforts to weaken and overthrow the Church of England, each having its own special hopes from the result, so the rival orders in the Papal Church, while they heartily hated each other,

were at all times ready to act in union against the Protestants, and for carrying on the great scheme of delusion in which they were all concerned. There was a tacit agreement among them to receive each other's bills; each affected to believe the other's inventions, and so all their fables obtained currency throughout the papal world. No difficulty was made in licensing them; the Court of Rome was not scrupulous in such matters; and on the most blasphemous of these fabrications the Romish Church set the seal of its infallibility, by canonizing the heroes and heroines of the tale, assigning them their places in the Kalendar, and appointing their legends to be read in its Church service. We have seen how it approved the Society of the Rosary, and by what indulgences it encouraged a practice of gross and palpable superstition, which was introduced and recommended by frauds and falsehoods as impudent as they are impious.

* * * * *

For the present, Sir, farewell. At a convenient season, I may complete the examination of your charges and statements, and show that they are in every instance as fallacious as those

which have been brought to the proof. There is not one which will not be scattered like chaff when the flail is laid on. I intended to have gone through the whole in this volume, but the steed of the pen, having, as the Persians say, got loose upon the plain of prolixity, has outrun my intention. Let me here recapitulate what has been done. I have shown that the Creed of Pope Pius IV. whereby, according to your own statement, the Romanists of this and every other country are bound, comprehends an assent to all those intolerable principles which the Papal Church has proclaimed, whenever it had no motive for concealing them, and has acted upon wherever it had the power. I have given an account of the Venerable Bede, the want of which in the Book of the Church you represented as a want of candour, though it would have been inconsistent with the design and proportions of that work to have introduced it there; his testimony concerning the miracles of his age has been placed in a new point of view, and his memory completely cleared from the only stain which could have sullied it. I have examined into the miracles which he has recorded, and explained how credulity prepared the way for craft; and how craft practised upon credulity. I have introduced also a specimen of Irish

hagiography in the life of St. Fursey, perhaps the most modest that could have been selected; it may be compared* with that of Mr. Alban Butler's composition, and it throws some light upon a subject to be pursued hereafter, ...the system of Saint Errantry. I have shown in what the papal laws concerning prohibited† degrees began, and in what they ended; ..that while religion and morals were the pretext, the real object was first to obtain power for the Papal Church, and afterwards money. It was then my task to vindicate the view which all Protestant historians have taken of Dunstan's life and character; and in so doing I have shown by what subterfuges and perversions of history the English Romanists seek to slur over the pretended miracles which he performed, and the detestable transactions in which he was engaged. In treating upon the celibacy of the

* It would be curious to compare it with the *Historia y Vida del admirable y extatico San Furseo, Principe Heredero de Irlanda,* by a certain Davila, who has expanded the legend into a volume, which I have never seen.

† Since that part of the volume was written, I have found that Pope Nicholas I. endeavoured to carry the prohibition as far as any consanguinity could be traced!.. "*hoc statuimus, ut nulli liceat Christiano de propriâ consanguinitate sive cognatione uxorem accipere usque dum generatio recordatur, cognoscitur, aut memoriâ retinetur.*"—Martene et Durand. Coll. Ampl. t. i. 150.

Clergy, I inquired into the causes which led to the introduction of that injurious system, and the political motives for which it was enforced, and I have given examples of the state of feeling and of morals which it produces. We came then to the case of Becket, where I have proved that he stood forth in defence not of old rights, but of recent usurpations, a "law-resisting custom" which was not "full-aged;" and that the principles for which he fell a victim, and is therefore at this day *venerated with special* honour by the British Roman Catholics as patron of the English Roman Catholic Clergy*, are at variance with the fundamental principles of the British constitution. I have put down the bootless boast of your speech-makers that England is indebted to the Romish religion for Magna Charta; and shown how that Charter was pronounced null and void by the Pope, and maintained in spite of him. I have glanced at the history of the Popes, in reference to the pretensions advanced by and for them; and as you had claimed our approbation for them on the score of their conduct toward

* In the Laity's Directory, which is the Almanack of the English Romanists, Becket's day is marked thus: "St. Thomas of Canterbury, B. Mart. doub. of first class, with an Octave, as Patron of the English Clergy; *red.* Feast of devotion."

the Jews, I have given a faithful summary of that conduct. Lastly, I have compared your statement of the Romish devotion to the Virgin, with what is taught in your books of popular instruction, and with the practice of your people: I have entered upon the history and mystery of the Rosary, touched upon the rise and progress of the Hyperdulia, and in so doing have produced proofs of idolatry, superstition and imposture against the Papal Church.

Bear in mind, Sir, that you called for such proofs; and that I am not the appellant in this controversy! I had let pass your Historical Memoirs, with all their offences on their head, when it lay in the course of my pursuits to have taken critical cognizance of them. As much from disposition as from principle, I dislike that sort of criticism which tends either to wound the feelings of an author, or to depreciate him in the opinion of the public: severity of this kind ought, in my judgement, never to be exercised, unless some public interest is concerned. Those Memoirs, Sir, were in that predicament. They bore upon a political question, which I believe to be the most insidious, the most mischievous, the most perilous, that has ever been brought forward since the Long Par-

liament; and if I had followed you through all your statements, for the purpose of showing what you had suppressed, and in how fallacious a light the facts were every where exhibited, I might in no small degree have counteracted the impression which those volumes were intended to produce. But that I was upon terms of courtesy and good-will with the author, was cause sufficient for withholding me. I have always admired that passage in the Iliad where Diomede and Glaucus meet in battle, and turn aside by mutual consent:

> Πολλοὶ μὲν γαρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες, κλειτοί τ' ἐπίκουροι
> Κτείνειν ὃν κε θεός γε πόρῃ, και ποσσὶ κιχείῳ·
> Πολλοὶ δ' αῦ σοι Ἀχαιοὶ, ενaιρέμεν ὃν κε δύνηαι.

I could wish that there had been a similar feeling on your part; and that the thanks of your Association had been voted as an undivided honour to Dr. Milner; in that case, bark as he might, I should not have stooped for a stone to fling at him. "*Hostes habeo plures quam vellem, fateor; sed contra non paucos habeo amicos, dignitate, authoritate, doctrinâ, morum integritate, præcellentes. Nec hactenus mihi quisquam exhibuit negotium, nisi aut cerebrosus, aut invidus, aut arroganter indoctus, aut ex calumniâ venans gloriam.*" Even your personal call, Sir, would



have been left unanswered by me, if there had not been something in the times which rendered reasonable the wish and the expectation on the part of my friends, and of those who feel and think with me, that I should reply to it. To that consideration I deferred; and then, instead of confining myself to a mere answer, I resolved, at some cost of time, upon taking a wider range, whereby two purposes might be effected; the one was that of tempering the spirit of controversy; the other that of exposing more fully the character, the practices, and the effects of the Papal system; and proving upon the Papal Church by its own history, and the testimony of its own writers and agents, those charges of imposture and wickedness, which from the indignation expressed by yourself, Sir, and by the British Roman Catholic Association, an ignorant person might suppose to have been first advanced in the Book of the Church. Those proofs are the Vindication of the Church of England, and of that Book, which I trust will continue to fulfil the object for which it was composed, long after you and I shall have put off with mortality our errors of judgement, and infirmities of mind; and, through the merits of our common Saviour, shall have entered into our promised rest. The English Creed does

not exclude from that promise all who are of a different persuasion; such an exclusion is asserted in the Romish one; and this difference is one of the arguments which your Clergy hold out to those among whom their proselytes are made. With the weak and ignorant it has its weight: but to the better spirits who have been trained up in such a principle of proclaimed intolerance, the temper of mind which it induces ought to be worth a thought, as the political consequences to which it necessarily leads are on our part "worth a fear."

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

January 17th, 1826.

THE END.


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